

MEMOIRS

RELATING TO

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

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THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

BY

THE MARQUIS DE BOUILLE. K

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH MANUSCRIPT.

" Nobilitas, opes, omiffi gestique honores, pro crimine, & ob
" virtutes, certiffimum exitium." TACITUS.

LONDON:

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1797.

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THE FRENCH REVOLUTION



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 The Marquis de BOUILLÉ having been absent from London, while his work was under the press, several errors have crept into the following translation. Those which merely affect the style, and some errors of dates, the indulgence of the reader will excuse; but there are others which alter the sense, and ought therefore to be corrected.

Page 3, line 1 of the note, for Annual Register read New Annual Register

- 4, — 7, for which comprises all the history of France read which comprises a sketch of the history of France
- 13, — 4, from the bottom, for those employed in the collection of the public revenue read the financiers
- 16, — 3, for a sceptre of iron read a firm and severe government
- 18, — 11, for three to four read four to three
- 24, — 15, after commandant add in chief
- 28, — 12, for other people read another nation
- 53, — 20, after high rank add a great consideration
- 55, — 6, for suggested by the assembly of the notables read which the assembling of the notables had suggested
- 58, — 16, for thirty read eighty
- 66, — penult. for eight read eighteen
- 84, — 5 of note, for define read verify
- 92, — 17, for the principal part of whom read the most distinguished of whom
- 130, — 15, for the people read mob
- 193, — 2, after infantry add devoted to the king
- 16, for without inhabitants read containing few inhabitants
- 22, for the Bishopricks read Les Évêchés—
The same correction in other parts
- 211, — 10, for guards read regiment
- 291, — 16, for degradation read comparative inferiority
- 292, — antepenult, for national read public
- 305, — 13, for disorders read indiscretions
- 327, — 2, for Goguelas read N * * *

INTRODUCTION:

IT had been my intention not to make public what I had written, as well on the French revolution, as on whatever I found interesting under the reigns of the two last sovereigns of France, relative to their courts, to the manners of the times, and the principal events to which I had been witness; I proposed leaving it to those who should come into possession of my Memoirs, either to publish them or commit them to the flames according to the judgment they should pass on them: but I have observed that after having constantly remained faithful to my sovereign and my duty, under circumstances the most extraordinary, the most trying, and the most dangerous, after having like many

others fallen the victim of my attachment to my king and country, and after being at last obliged to fly, carrying with me nothing but the consciousness of an honourable conduct, attempts have been made to ravish from me even that only consolation of my adverse fortune.

By the anarchists and Jacobins I have been called a traitor, and branded as infamous; the constitutionalists accuse me of having violated the oath I had taken to their constitution, a fabric whose sandy foundation giving way of itself, it fell, and buried those who had raised it under its ruins; even the royalists whose cause I defended, have regarded me as an intriguer acting from no motives but those of self-interest, and acknowledging no guide but my ambition. The former I have despised as miscreants or madmen; the latter I have pitied, as under the irritation of misfortune, which often renders men unjust; and I should have kept silence if this misrepresentation of my principles and conduct had not at

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the

the same time spread to foreign countries. English writers justly esteemed have thought proper to insert in their works, calumnies invented against me by the most furious Jacobins*.

The more marks of esteem and goodwill I have received from the English

* The Annual Register for the year 1791, page 97, speaking of the affair of Nancy, has the following passage: "Such an arrangement however did not suit the views of the perfidious and sanguinary Bouillé. Without waiting the result of the deputation from Nancy, he hastened with a fatal rashness (as was confessed even by his advocates) to enforce the decree of the 16th. He collected all the troops that he could assemble from every part, and such of the national guard as preferred a patriotic subordination to the immediate dictates of their feelings and their consciences. In spite of their offers of submission, he fell upon the regiments of *chateaux vieux* and *mestre de camp*, and after putting an immense number to the sword, he completely routed them and took 400 prisoners." And again the same publication, speaking of the king's flight, page 112, proceeds thus: "The perfidious Bouillé, who had so wantonly embued his hands in the blood of his fellow-soldiers in the affair of Nancy, was the principal agent on this occasion, &c." The Monthly Magazine likewise, for October 1796, page 727, accuses me of being the author of the king's flight.

nation, the more I think it my duty to refute the attacks made upon my moral character, by writings destined to serve as materials for history. It is then for the purpose of vindicating myself that I publish at this time, and in the English language, that part of my *Mémoires* which comprises all the history of France, from my return from the colonies in 1783, to the entry of the Prussian and Austrian armies into Champagne.

Between these epochs are included the most interesting circumstances of my life, connected with events of the greatest importance. Truth, which has ever directed my pen, will clear my conduct to a nation whose good opinion I have always endeavoured to deserve, which I esteemed when its enemy, which has afforded me an asylum when banished my country, assisted me in my misfortunes, and received me with kindness and hospitality.

May England long enjoy the fruits of her happy constitution, and continue to remain

remain an instance of a wise and moderate government, equally distant from despotism and anarchy. May she, amid the riches poured in upon her daily by her commerce and the industry of her subjects, may she preserve that public spirit to which she is indebted for her prosperity, her greatness, and the advantage of being this day first in the scale of nations!

An empire like England, whose situation renders her independent, whose riches enable her to maintain the best and most powerful armies in Europe, and which supplies the wants of every nation; such an empire may become the general arbiter, and secure the general tranquillity; it would even find an advantage in preserving the peace of Europe, I mean the improvement of its commerce. But instead of being useful, its power would become pernicious, unless accompanied by rectitude of conduct and fidelity to its engagements: these virtues belong to the powerful;

ful; insincerity, perfidy, and falsehood are only the resources of the weak.

But should corruption ever introduce itself into the manners of the English nation, should the veneration for religion be diminished, public spirit become extinct, and private interest predominate; should the thirst of riches destroy the patriotic passion, a spirit of innovation prevail, and sacrilegious hands be laid upon the fundamental laws of the constitution; then may the spectacle of the dissolution of one of the most flourishing empires in the world offer itself to their eyes, and warn them of their temerity. I see that a general error obtains with respect to the causes which have destroyed France; consequences have been taken for principles: it is neither the worm that slowly consumes the body, nor the vulture which voraciously devours it, that engenders its corruption: it is not the men whom we have seen at the head of the revolution that were the causes of it; on the contrary, the natural conse-

consequence of a revolution was to produce such men.

Frequently an actor in the events which have taken place in France within these last thirty years, always an attentive observer of them, I have perhaps been able better than another man to trace the causes which have brought on this great catastrophe. May I here be permitted to relate them? The picture, though rapidly executed, may prove a preservative to those nations which still retain their vigour. The anatomy of the dead sometimes contributes to the safety of the living.

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MEMOIRS

RELATING TO *THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.*

CHAP. I.

A View of the Causes of the French Revolution.

Louis the Fourteenth, having thrown down the feeble barriers which had confined the power of his predecessors, established an absolute monarchy in France almost at the same time that the last revolution in England fixed upon a solid basis the liberty of the people and the power of the sovereign. But the French monarch, though he acknowledged no limitation to his will, yet regulated his conduct by great maxims of state, and by prin-

principles of government which he invariably observed during a long and brilliant reign, in which he experienced alternately the smiles and frowns of fortune. The last thirty years of his life were spent in repairing, by a conduct the most exemplary, the injury he had offered to religion and morality during his youth.

The regent, whom this prince used to call a braggart of vice, by his licentious behaviour sowed the first seeds of corruption. These took deep root, but were prevented from coming to maturity by the wise administration of Cardinal de Fleuri, who was at the head of affairs during the first twenty years of the reign of Louis the Fifteenth. On the death of this minister, the sovereign he had served, a weak and effeminate prince, resigned his person and kingdom into the hands of his mistresses, who abandoned them to the guidance of ministers, frequently incapable, and who always owed their places to intrigue. Some, like the duke de Choiseul,

seuil, by their imprudence, levity, and audacity, quickly overturned the whole system of government, both moral and political, which Louis the Fourteenth, assisted by the ablest statesmen of his age, had founded. Thenceforth began to appear that revolutionary principle which threatened the kingdom.

It was M. de Choiseuil who completed the corruption of the court by having recourse to bribery, the same means he employed to corrupt the nobility of the provinces after having drawn them thither: he soon taught them to prefer interest and intrigue to honour, that sacred charge which they had so long preserved. The army, likewise, he infected with the same spirit, changing its constitution, which, extraordinary as it was, rendered it one of the best in Europe. Instead of confining the parliaments within the limits prescribed them by the sovereign authority as established by Louis the Fourteenth; he was the first minister who endeavoured
to

to pervert their spirit, and he succeeded: the magistrates abandoned that severity of manners, that gravity which had characterized their fathers, and for which the magistracy of France had ever been remarkable. The same man changed the spirit and character of the higher orders of the clergy, by disposing of the first dignities of the church to the young nobility. He shook the political system of France, by cementing an alliance with its ancient enemy, the house of Austria; he fomented the disturbances which had arisen among the English colonies in America: in fine, he protected the dangerous sect of philosophers and men of letters; permitting them to disseminate without control their destructive principles. Such was the conduct of this minister during the twelve years that he governed France.

However, Louis the Fifteenth, towards the conclusion of his reign, seemed to shake off his lethargy, and to open his eyes to the misfortunes under which his kingdom laboured,

laboured, and the still greater with which it was threatened. His mistress was at that time more engaged in the pursuit of pleasure than in schemes of ambition, and she left the government of the kingdom to ministers more firm and more enlightened: these endeavoured to stop the progress of the evil, but they did not strike at its root; besides, it had already made too great progress to be easily extirpated. The chancellor Maupeou, a man of a great character, unable to bring back to a sense of their duty the parliaments, who had already formed the project of establishing an aristocracy in France by participating in the sovereign authority, adopted the violent but necessary resolution of annihilating them. The Abbé Terray rectified the disorder of the finances, by laying down a strict and vigorous plan, by which he imposed a check upon the rapacity of those employed in the collection of the public revenue. The duke d'Aiguillon, educated in the principles of his great uncle cardinal

dinal Richelieu, seemed desirous of changing the new system of politics introduced by the preceding ministry; and of re-establishing in the army its ancient institutions, and recalling its former spirit. Lastly, the government displayed a wish to repress the licentiousness of authors, and again to inspire the public with that respect and obedience which is due to authority.

Had the prince I am speaking of lived a few years longer, and continued to employ the same ministers, or had their successors acted upon the same principles, the existence of the monarchy might still have been prolonged to a distant period; for I am of opinion with Montesquieu, that a government can only be supported by maxims and means analogous to the principle on which it is founded, and that an absolute monarchy tends towards its dissolution the moment the authority of the sovereign experiences any diminution.

Louis

Louis the Fifteenth however died, and was succeeded by a prince young and inexperienced, possessing all the virtues which are an ornament to private life, but none of those qualities which were become necessary in a situation so difficult. Instead of retaining the ministers of his predecessor, he dismissed them all without exception, choosing for his counsellor and guide a man above seventy, who having been a minister at the age of fifteen, had retired from his employment in the prime and vigour of his life, and was now to direct a young monarch and govern a kingdom in the infancy of his old age. He was a man without resolution, without virtues, without abilities, but at the same time mild, affable, and complying. He employed under him men by no means qualified for their office, remarkable rather for probity than talents; and some of them, among whom may be reckoned M. Turgot, extremely dangerous from their systematic spirit.

The

The French nation, in the corrupt state to which it had arrived, could no longer be governed but by a sceptre of iron, like that of Louis the Fourteenth; but this was too weighty for the hands of Louis the Sixteenth: his aged counsellor recommended mildness instead of severity, and the king was easily made to believe, that the love of his people ought to be preferred to their fear. This man forgot, without doubt, to convince his sovereign of the truth of that great maxim, that the beneficence of kings consists in their justice; and that this, if he had listened to it, would have prescribed the establishment of order and regularity in the different parts of his dominions, and in relieving the most numerous and most useful class of his subjects, the labouring poor: these were at that time harassed and rendered unhappy by the avarice and rapacity not only of the courtiers, but likewise of that immense crowd, some of whom, by intrigue, divided amongst them the spoils of the nation, whilst others, sheltering themselves
beneath

beneath the privileges of their order, or situation, threw the whole weight of the public burden upon the inferior ranks of society:

His majesty suffered himself to be persuaded, and his ministers persuaded themselves, that the enlightened, but at the same time restless, jealous, insatiable, and corrupt description of men who inhabited the court, the capital, and the great cities, composed the mass of the people; these, however, in reality formed a very small part of the nation, and that the most depraved in its morals, and the most dangerous, from the turbulent spirit with which it was agitated. Thenceforth the opinion of this part of the public became the uncertain guide of government. The king by his goodness, the queen by her graces, and the ministry by condescension, now only studied to please and captivate them. It was this desire which led to the re-establishment of the parliaments, without even depriving them of the means

of injuring the lawful authority in future; without guarding against the destructive plan they had formerly concerted *, and which they might resume and complete at pleasure. For this same purpose the public treasury was exhausted, and its riches distributed among that voracious crowd which composed or surrounded the court; thus producing disorder in the finances, though taxes within a very few years increased in the proportion of three to four. It was for this the king and queen divested the throne of that majesty which surrounded it, and which had till then inspired the people with sentiments of respect and veneration. It was to please this public that doctrines were licensed the most adverse to morality, religion, and authority; philosophers and writers were permitted to take possession of the public opinion, to regulate it as they pleased, to erect it into a tribunal, and to

* So far back as the year 1763, the parliaments had formed an union among themselves, styling each other a division of the national parliament.

examine at its bar the actions and conduct of the government. It was for this same purpose that assistance was given to the American colonies when they revolted from the British nation; that a ruinous war was engaged in to secure their independence, and that to divert the public mind from the injustice of the cause they had espoused, the republican dogma of the sovereignty of the people was tolerated, and suffered to diffuse itself through the whole kingdom: in fine, so totally was every principle of policy and morality disregarded, that the public mind was already democratical, whilst the monarchy still existed, so that when the disordered state of the finances compelled the king to assemble the notables for the purpose of applying a remedy, this assembly could do no service; nor could the states general, which were substituted to them, do any thing more effectual. All the humours of this vast political body were in a fermentation. The magistracy was ambitious, the clergy jealous

of their privileges, a spirit of insurrection prevailed among the nobility, whilst there was a total want of subordination in the army, particularly among the chiefs: licentiousness and insolence pervaded the middle ranks of society, whilst the lower class experienced the extreme of misery, and the rich indulged themselves in the most unbounded luxury. The government was without energy, the court despised, and the great were sunk into a state of degradation; irreligion and immorality were diffused among the first orders, restlessness and discontent among all: the treasury was exhausted, the public credit ruined, and all the ordinary resources were worn out. The states general, soon become a popular assembly, brought things to a crisis, but it was not they who were the cause of it; it was the natural and unavoidable effect of the corruption of the people, and the weakness of the monarch. It is difficult to imagine that France, like England after the revolution which she experienced in the last century, and from the time of the
resto-

restoration, will emerge with greater vigour than she possessed before. The English had preserved their morals and their religion, whilst the French have abandoned both. Without these necessary restraints men can never live in a state of society, much less can a great nation be governed or govern itself.

The fate of Europe is connected with that of France, and I do not hesitate to give it as my opinion, that the only hope which remains is founded upon the return of those moral and religious ideas which already begin to resume their empire amid the most frightful disorders: it is even probable, that the reasonable part of the French nation, instructed by the misfortunes they have experienced, is again disposed to receive the salutary yoke of a good government: but if this be only an illusion, if the monsters which France contains within her bosom still preserve or are resuming a preponderance, then will that

devoted country present a scene of ruin and desolation ; its inhabitants will become a barbarous and savage people, dangerous to their neighbours, and will at last fall a prey to their own fury. But should Italy be formed into a republic, what is to become of all Europe ? Should Spain likewise, already infected with the poison of French Jacobinism, which is only prevented from breaking forth by the moral and religious principles of the people, should Spain experience a revolution, what must be the consequence ? The nations of the north, entrenched behind their natural barriers, ought to attach themselves more closely than ever to their constitution, religion, laws, and even ancient customs ; they should form among themselves the strictest union cemented by all the power of Great Britain. If this does not take place, Europe, like part of Asia and Africa formerly, will be plunged into a state of barbarism which will dry up its soil, and destroy its inhabitants.

May

May England at least, mistress of the ocean, by which she is separated from the rest of the world, may she escape this deluge of iniquity, and nourish in her bosom every virtue, that she may afterwards disperse them to mankind, and render the human race happier by making them better! This is the last wish a man without connection or country can form in favour of his fellow-creatures.

CHAP. II.

Voyage into England and Holland.—Observations on the situation of those two countries at that time.—A journey into Prussia and Bohemia.—Reflections on Frederick the Second, and the emperor Joseph.—The former wishes the king of France to enter into the Germanic confederation.—Projects of France and Holland against the English settlements in the East Indies.

1783.

I ARRIVED in France some time in the month of May 1783, after having been during the whole of the American war in the French West India Islands, of which his majesty had made me commandant. Loaded with marks of my sovereign's favour, who had created me lieutenant-general, and conferred on me the order of the Holy Ghost; in the vigour of life, and possessed of an ample fortune; after having passed six years of toil in a distant and dangerous climate,

climate, I revisited my country, which I found greatly changed, it is true, in its manners and even in its customs: but at Paris I promised myself the full enjoyment of all those charms and pleasures which that capital afforded, till circumstances which I did not desire might again call me to serve my king and country. Soon, however, disgusted with such a round of frivolity and dissipation, and impelled by curiosity, I formed the project of quitting Paris, and travelling into the different countries of Europe. 1783.

I was particularly curious to visit Britain; the excellence of its marine, the prosperity and extent of its commerce, the public spirit for which it is remarkable; its inexhaustible resources, and the energy of its government; all these inspired me with an ardent desire of being acquainted with the principal springs by which it moved: I wanted likewise to inform myself of the causes which had for near a century rendered England the successful rival of France, and

1783. and for upwards of thirty years in some manner the arbiters of Europe.

I wished to see Frederic before his death, to see the relics of one of the greatest men that ever flourished upon the theatre of the world. I wished at the same time to obtain a knowledge of that Prussian army, which had contributed so much to his success and glory. Joseph, too, I was anxious to see, the rival of Frederic in power, the greatest admirer of his talents, and the imitator of his conduct. Such were the objects of my first travels.

1784. I set out for England in the beginning of the month of February 1784. I remained there about five months, during which I experienced a very favourable reception from his Britannic majesty, from the principal persons of the nation, and from the public in general. From the planters and West India merchants I received a most flattering testimony of their gratitude. I had acted only with justice towards

towards the inhabitants of the English colonies which had been under the protection of my sovereign during the war, and they were pleased to pass on my conduct encomiums it by no means deserved, though they were highly gratifying to my feelings. 1784.

In acting as I did towards the British settlements, I only followed the example of many English commanders, and particularly general Melville, who, when governor of Grenada, treated the inhabitants of the conquered French West India Islands with the most exemplary humanity, and they in return took every opportunity of expressing their gratitude to him.

Next to the approbation of our own conscience, that of an enemy we esteem is the most pleasing acknowledgment a worthy action can receive, and the only one which can be remembered with satisfaction at a time when the passions have lost their force.

I saw

1784.

I saw the English nation in one of those moments of agitation which is the natural effect of liberty, but which the wisdom of a prudent and enlightened people moderates, and a firm and vigorous government knows how to repress. The majority of the British parliament seemed to threaten the royal prerogative, which, as one of the principal foundations of the constitution, was defended by the whole nation with as much ardour as we have since seen other people exert in the destruction of it.

I saw this nation at the conclusion of a civil and foreign war, during which, for several years, besides her revolted colonies, she had to contend with the united forces of France, Spain, and Holland: I saw her emerge from this extraordinary combat as rich, powerful, and formidable as she was before, notwithstanding the loss of America and three millions of her industrious subjects.

I saw

I saw religion respected, and its sacred
mysteries shielded from the attacks of pre-
sumptuous philosophers. I saw morality
diffused through the people, and supported
among the rich and great, by the influence
of public opinion. I saw the wealth of
individuals made the instrument of the
general happiness, and employed to pro-
mote the prosperity of the community.
I saw luxury indulged with moderation,
and made subservient to the public utility,
without insulting, as elsewhere, a state of
wretchedness here hardly known. I saw
beneficence and philanthropy made a part
of the national character; and the proudest
people in the world, at the same time the
most generous and humane. If there ap-
peared to me some defects in the subordi-
nate parts of the British government, yet
I judged that a nation happy in itself and
powerful abroad must undoubtedly have the
best of human institutions, and I offered
up my best wishes for its maintenance in
its original purity, regretting that its prin-
ciples

1784.

1784

ciples were not known to surrounding nations.

On leaving England I passed through Holland in my way to Prussia. The Dutch I found agitated in a contrary direction. The defects and weakness of their government had obliged them in a time of imminent danger to increase the hereditary power of the commander in chief of their army, who was become the principal magistrate of that aristocratical republic. The danger over, he still preserved the same power: one part of the nation however wished to deprive the house of Orange of this enormous prerogative, and to change the form of government for one more popular. This party was supported by France, which had given it sufficient power and influence to engage the States-general in a war with England, in opposition to the Stadtholder and the aristocratical party. The United Provinces, in short, were then on the eve
of

of experiencing a revolution in their government, which, however corrupt or vicious, had hitherto been sufficient to secure for them tranquillity, riches, and happiness: but these are blessings which nations no more than individuals know how either to enjoy or to preserve. Holland was at this time too menaced by the emperor Joseph, whose pretensions, contrary to every existing treaty, were supported by an army already hovering on her borders. France, on the present occasion, protected her, but a few years afterwards she basely abandoned the democratic party which she had revived, encouraged, and armed.

1784.

The Dutch, when I passed through their country, still preserved the remains of their ancient splendour; plenty and riches every where met the eye; the domestic virtues were still practised, but public spirit no longer existed: their government was corrupt; and this people, formerly so celebrated and so industrious, scarcely remembered

1784 membered how great it had been. The sources of its power and prosperity were drying up; and Holland would of itself have dwindled into nothing, had not extraordinary events accelerated her ruin; Prussia offered me quite a different spectacle; a military government, where every man was a soldier. Here an absolute authority was lodged in the hands of the sovereign; the whole nation was an army, the court a camp, and the monarch a general; on his merit, virtues, and talents depended the glory and prosperity of his people and the safety of his dominions. This government resembled that of the ancient inhabitants of the country, the Goths and Vandals, who, after they had overthrown the Roman empire, had transported it from the banks of the Elbe, into Italy, Africa, and upon the borders of the Tagus.

Frederic then was the principal object which Prussia offered to the curiosity of

a traveller, if I except his formidable army, the discipline and military skill of which, that great man had carried to a pitch till that time unheard of. In the hero who had astonished all Europe by his exploits, I found only a prince solicitous to promote the happiness of his subjects, and to preserve that superiority which his army had acquired; to maintain tranquillity in his own dominions, and to preserve it throughout Europe by establishing it on a more solid basis than heretofore. At the time I am speaking of, his Prussian majesty was endeavouring to accomplish that Germanic confederation, which after his death was to oppose a barrier to the ambition of the house of Austria; a power daily increasing in importance from the military system which it had lately adopted, and the immense resources for war afforded by its population.

Received by Frederic in a manner which surpassed my expectations, I had opportunities of approaching him, of seeing

1784. him frequently in his retired moments : here, divested of his grandeur and majesty, the hero of his age appeared only a man, as superior to others by the brilliancy of his understanding and the vigour of his mind, as by his elevated rank and station. His philosophy was improved by his experience in the art of governing men ; and the sovereign who knew how to make every passion contribute to the safety and happiness of the community over which he presided, displayed more true wisdom than those philosophers who, pretending to subject them to the dominion of reason, have overthrown that social order, which could alone be preserved by the authority of the prince and the power of the laws.

The more essential virtues of this prince were likewise accompanied by the most amiable qualities. No man who had frequented the best company in Europe possessed more politeness, more affability, or more engaging manners. No philosopher

fopher or man of letters was better informed or possessed more extensive knowledge. His conversation, instructive and interesting, was enlivened by brilliant sallies, and frequently by pointed raillery. Ease and freedom added new charms to a society in which every one was left at liberty to contribute to the general entertainment. Those who had for a few hours enjoyed the conversation of Frederic, went away with a much higher opinion of their own understanding than they had before; all their intellectual faculties were unfolded, and they felt themselves in a manner electrified. 1784.

This prince had undoubtedly faults, he is even reproached with vices: but where is the man exempt from them, particularly if he be destined to act a conspicuous part upon the theatre of life?

From Prussia I set out for Bohemia. At my departure the king was pleased to invite me to return the following year.

1784.

He communicated this desire to me by means of the abbé Bastiani, his intimate friend: for this prince had friends, and he is perhaps one of the few sovereigns who ever had. This gentleman, who had given me many proofs of his confidence, imparted to me the project which the king had formed of establishing a Germanic league; he assured me that his majesty earnestly desired France to take part in it, and engaged me to mention the subject to M. de Vergennes, which I promised to do.

The emperor Joseph was now assembling a camp at Prague; the king of Prussia was likewise forming several in different parts of his dominions, both for the same purpose.

I shall not draw a comparison between the armies of these two monarchs. Such was the perfection of military discipline in each, that their superiority solely depended upon that of the chief who led them.

On

On my arrival at Prague I was presented to Joseph. The virtues, qualities, defects, and inconsistencies of this monarch are well known. At the time I saw him he was engaged in destroying the feudal system, and the old monarchical forms in the greater part of his dominions. Under pretext of releasing his people from servitude, he sought to deprive the noblemen and great lords of those prerogatives which made them sovereigns, and rather his vassals than his subjects. He was altering the ancient constitution of those rich provinces which still preserved their representative assemblies; and was attempting in all of them to establish a military government, like that of Prussia. Effectually to annihilate superstition, he attacked the established religion of his dominions, and to correct the abuses of the clergy he seized upon their riches.

At the same time he projected the acquisition of Bavaria, in exchange for the Low Countries, where a great fermentation

1784. had been excited by his innovations, and where he had razed all the fortresses. He was involving Holland in a war which was likely to interest all the great powers of Europe; and he extended his ambitious views even to the frontiers of Turkey.

All these different projects the emperor undertook at once, and in all he failed. At his death, which happened a few years after, he saw his finest provinces revolt, drive out his troops, and declare open war against him, whilst the rest appeared ready to imitate their example. The only thing in which he succeeded was in forming an excellent army and establishing a formidable military power.

Towards the end of the year I returned to France; and took the first opportunity of representing to M. de Vergennes the advantages that might be expected, should France detach herself from her alliance with the house of Austria, which had ever been more pernicious than useful, and enter
into

into the grand confederation projected by the king of Prussia. He coincided with me in opinion, but said that it would always be time enough to make a treaty with Prussia. I objected to delay, representing the inconveniences which might result from it, and particularly that it would furnish an opportunity for the king of England to enter into the league; I added, that I knew steps had already been taken for that purpose. He was struck with this remark, and said with an air of conviction, "Believe me, Sir, it does not depend upon me." This was exactly the observation made to me whilst in Prussia, by the abbé Bastiani, who feared the weakness of our government and the intrigues of our court. I found an opportunity however of mentioning the same subject to the king, and had with him a long conversation upon it. His majesty did not make me the same answer as his minister, which he might have done; his discourse was full of prudence, good sense, and knowledge of the state of

1784.

1784. politics. He seemed to me to dislike the emperor, and to fear the king of Prussia.

The following summer I set out on my return to Prussia, intending afterwards to visit Russia. M. de Vergennes desired me to assure the abbé Bastiani of the favourable disposition of the king his master, which would appear whenever circumstances should require it; but he still shewed the same aversion to engaging himself by a treaty. I found the abbé at Sans Souci, where he had passed the winter with the king. We had a long conversation together before a private dinner, to which that prince had invited me. The abbé told me that the refusal, or rather the hesitation of the court of France, had determined his sovereign to accede to the propositions of the court of London, and that lord Cornwallis was hourly expected with full powers to conclude a definitive treaty. This was what I might have expected, of course I was not much surpris'd.

How-

However, the king's behaviour towards me was not in the least altered either at dinner or during the whole time that I passed at his court: I experienced from him the same affability and condescension as formerly, though he now and then indulged in pleasantries on our court, intermixing occasional compliments to the French nation.

1784.

At the moment I was preparing to depart for Russia, I received an order from government immediately to return. On my arrival, I was acquainted by the ministers with a project relative to the East Indies. The object of this was, to unite the French and Dutch forces in an attack upon the English possessions, to restore to the princes of the country the provinces conquered from them by the English, and to obtain and secure for the two nations, factories and commercial establishments which were to be free to the whole world. The means employed to insure success to this enterprise were an army

1784

army of eighteen thousand men, independent of the garrisons already in that country, twenty millions of livres in specie, and a naval force able to oppose that of the English in the East Indies. Trincomale in the island of Ceylon was the place destined for the rendezvous of the troops and the repository of the military magazines. One third of the forces as well as of the sums necessary, and stores and provisions of every kind were to be furnished by the Dutch, who had requested that I might have the command of the expedition, which was in consequence offered me. I accepted it on condition that I should not be under the control of the Dutch commercial companies, but that the States General should appoint a military committee to regulate and direct whatever concerned the war, which was agreed to. This plan, of which I have given a sketch, was very extensive in its branches; but the time of its execution was yet at some distance: as I saw no preparations for war, nor any reasons to

declare it, I therefore remained in France 1784.
expecting that event to take place.

In 1787 the revolution broke out in 1787.
Holland, but was quickly suppressed by
the entry of a Prussian army commanded
by the duke of Brunswick. The French
party was disheartened, the aristocrats re-
gained a superiority, the house of Orange
its ancient influence, and the stadtholderate
its prerogative and its former power; all
the bonds which united France and Hol-
land were dissolved, the former basely
abandoning her ally; and thus the vast
project of the conquest of the Indies
vanished into air.

CHAP. III.

State of France at the beginning of the reign of Louis the Sixteenth.—M. de Maurepas, M. de Vergennes, M. de Calonne.—Plans of the two latter ministers.—Convocation of the Notables.—Steps taken by that assembly, and the effects which they produced.—The archbishop of Toulouse, afterwards cardinal Loménie, placed at the head of the finances.—Dissolves the assembly of the Notables.—Is appointed prime minister.—His errors and inconsistencies.—I am appointed commandant of Metz, and of the province des Evéchés.—Beginning of the disturbances in France.—Measures pursued by the parliaments.—Both they and the clergy demand a convocation of the States General, which is earnestly desired by the whole nation.—What the estates of the kingdom were formerly.—Observations upon

upon the change in the manners and customs of the French nation and government since the year 1614, the period when the States General were last assembled.

THIS year the revolution which had 1787.
already taken place in the mind and in the manners and customs of the nation, began to shew itself in the government. I have already explained the remote causes of that revolution. I shall now proceed to relate those which more immediately conduced to bring it about ; together with a part of the events to which it gave birth.

M. de Maurepas, principal minister, had governed the kingdom during the former part of the reign of Louis the Sixteenth, but instead of remedying the disorders of the state, he rather augmented them. I have already described the levity and negligence of his character ; he was more attentive to the little intrigues of a court, than to the great concerns of a nation ;
more

1787. more studious of his own ease and enjoyments than of the safety of the state.

It is easy to conceive what must be the lamentable effects of such a character upon the administration of a great kingdom, and even upon the habits and decisions of a young prince, whose good sense and purity of heart would have secured the happiness of his people, had the earlier part of his reign been under the guidance of a man of more virtue and capacity than this minister.

On the death of M. de Maurepas, the king transferred his confidence to M. de Vergennes, who rather influenced than directed his conduct.

This person, by nature timid, was fearful of giving offence to the court and great men: he wanted vigour and genius, but was in other respects a man of good sense and an enlightened understanding.

Alarmed

1787.
Alarmed at the critical situation in which the kingdom stood, he explained its condition to his majesty: he observed that in the present state of affairs, it was absolutely necessary to have recourse to some extraordinary means, and to establish a new plan of administration to avoid a violent catastrophe.

The most immediate, though not the greatest of all the calamities with which France was afflicted, was the disorder in her finances, occasioned by a long course of extravagance, and increased by the American war, which involved her in an expence of twelve hundred millions of livres tournois. To remedy this evil some new resource was necessary, the old being completely exhausted. M. de Calonne, minister of the finances, had imagined a vast and bold plan which he had proposed to M. de Vergennes; it was now submitted to the king, who gave it his approbation, and promised to support it with his whole power.

This

1787.

This plan, without attacking the principles of the French monarchy, without placing any restraint upon the authority of the sovereign, changed entirely the old system of administration in the finances: it was calculated radically to remove all its defects; the greatest of which proceeded from the abuse of the privileges of the richest class of contributors, including not only the *grande*s of the kingdom and persons in power, but the first orders of the state, the provinces and the cities, and which threw the great weight of taxes upon the most numerous, but most indigent part of the nation, who were overwhelmed by them.

The plan of M. de Calonne was connected with that of the provincial administrations, which were meant to be substituted to the arbitrary establishment of the *intendants*. It was to be supported by an assembly of the notables of the kingdom, formed with a view to counterbalance the parliaments. These measures were the more

more acceptable to the king, as they tended to fulfil the dearest wish of his heart, that of relieving the most numerous class of his subjects. 1787.

The Notables of the kingdom were summoned for the 29th of January 1787. Of this assembly I was a member. It had not been held since the year 1626, under Louis the Thirteenth. At that time the prime minister was cardinal Richelieu, and he directed all its movements, making them subservient to his own views and projects; this was not the case in the present instance.

The opening of the assembly of the Notables had been put off till the 22d of February, during which interval M. de Vergennes died, and M. de Calonne lost his coadjutor and support. Another inconvenience attending this delay was, that it gave time to the Notables and to the public to recover from their first surprise; it likewise afforded intriguers an opportunity

1787.

tunity of putting in practice those schemes which they had formed to frustrate the plan of the government.

The assembly of the Notables was composed of the most distinguished persons among the clergy, the nobility, the magistracy, and the municipal bodies of the principal cities; consequently it was natural to suppose that they would object to the abolition of abuses by which they were the gainers. Nothing but the first impulse of enthusiasm could determine them to make the important sacrifices expected from them. However, the nobles, the deputies from the different cities, and the magistrates who were members of the king's council, constituted the majority of this assembly, and were well disposed towards the intended regulations; they would certainly have brought over the whole had it not been for the intrigues of the clergy artfully conducted by the archbishop of Thoulouse, afterwards cardinal de Loménie. This man was one of the

Notables,

Notables, and aspired to the office of prime minister. Supported by the chief officers of state, and by the queen, who personally detested M. de Calonne, and seconded by the members of the magistracy, he found means to alter the good disposition of the assembly. That body now bent all its efforts to the destruction of the minister who had convoked it; and he, finding himself abandoned by the king, was disgraced, and forced precipitately to leave the country, to avoid the vengeance of those whom his projects were calculated to affect. 1787.

Cardinal de Loménie was now appointed to the superintendence of the finances, and shortly after he had the temerity to accept the reins of government, which the king imprudently confided to him, by creating him prime minister. His first step was to dismiss the Notables, whom he might usefully have employed, by means of the influence that his intrigues had hitherto gained over their conduct.

1787.

On the dissolution of this assembly, being appointed commandant of the city of Metz and of the province of the bishoprics, I immediately set off to enter on the functions of my office. The new minister, deprived of the support of the Notables, was soon at the mercy of the parliaments. He collected some fragments of the plan of M. de Calonne, which contained many excellent things, and presented the means of a temporary relief from the present embarrassments: these, however, he was prevented from putting in execution by an obstinate resistance on the part of the parliaments. To punish these, some vigorous measures of authority were employed, but always followed by acts of weakness. These bodies renewed their association, and established by their decrees the principles of a parliamentary aristocracy to which they constantly adhered. From this period we may date the commencement of the troubles in France. Bretagne was the place where they first broke out. To this province govern-

government was obliged to march an army, commanded by marechal de Stainville, which however could not be made use of, from the spirit of disaffection which manifested itself among the troops, and more particularly among the officers. At Paris, the discontent among the people, encouraged and fomented by factious members of the parliament, shewed itself in acts of insurrection, which it was necessary to suppress with military force. This momentary triumph however, on the part of government, did not disconcert the parliament. It cited to its bar both marechal de Biron, commander of the French guards, and the commander of the guard at Paris, to give an account of their conduct. The first refused to obey the summons, and escaped in consequence of his high rank: the second was removed from his employment by a weak condescension on the part of government.

At the beginning of the year 1788 the troubles still continued to increase. In

1788. many provinces which before the reign of Louis the Fourteenth had their *provincial states*, the government had re-established those institutions, in others they had created provincial assemblies. This measure, though founded on good principles, yet rather served to increase than allay the fermentation, which had risen to a most alarming height, particularly in Dauphiny. To this province, as to Bretagne, troops were marched, but the greater part refusing to act against the people, instead of being of any utility they only brought the authority of government into contempt, by giving this public proof of its weakness.

Cardinal de Loménie, wearied out with the resistance which he experienced from the parliaments, persuaded the king to adopt the romantic project of a plenary court, which would have cut off those assemblies from all hope of obtaining that portion of the legislative power which they wished to possess.

With

With a view of concealing their ambitious designs, and to preserve their influence over the people, the parliaments thinking it would never be granted, demanded a convocation of the States General of the kingdom, an idea suggested by the assembly of the Notables. The clergy, with the same persuasion, and from the same motives, joined in the request; and government committed the still greater fault of promising compliance. 1788.

Near two centuries had now elapsed since the States General of the kingdom had been convoked, and such great changes had taken place in the manner of thinking, in the customs, character, and government of the French nation, that they could not fail of producing a general commotion.

To the States General in former ages, none of the clergy were admitted but such as held benefices; of the nobility but those who were proprietors of fiefs, and of the

1788. third estate but deputies chosen by great cities from among their municipal officers, or principal notables. They were never assembled but on extraordinary occasions, such as intestine commotions or foreign wars: hardly ever did any good result from the convocation of them, and once in particular they occasioned great disorders. This happened, it is true, under Charles the Sixth, at the time that prince was insane. France was then distracted by an intestine and foreign war, and the English were masters of a great part of the kingdom. These states were held at Paris.

The number of representatives which composed the States General was never precisely fixed; it seldom exceeded five hundred, and sometimes did not exceed two hundred. It was not of importance that one order sent more deputies than another; for the votes were then taken by order, by bailiwick, or even by nation, which last was at that time one of the nominal divisions of France, as government

ment has been since. The members of the different parliaments sat individually among the third estate when chosen. In the letters of convocation, the king announced the object for which the States General were assembled: he dissolved them at pleasure; he permitted the different orders, and the provinces, which had almost all their particular assemblies, to present their grievances called *doléances*, which he redressed as he thought proper: but at that time the clergy was held in great veneration, the nobility was extremely powerful, and the third estate, destitute of force itself, obeyed the impulse of the two superior orders.

Since the assembly of the States in 1614, their forms and principles had been adopted by the parliaments: but except this, every vestige of the old government had disappeared, nor were even the elementary parts of the States General the same. In the order of the clergy, the bishops and abbots, formerly elected by the members of that body, and then proposed for the approbation of the

1788. the people; and, after the *concordat* under Francis the First, generally chosen from among men the most remarkable for their morals, their piety, and erudition; were held in the greatest veneration by the public: but these dignities having been since disposed of to the young nobility of the court and provinces, that order had lost much of its consideration, especially as the respect for religion itself was greatly weakened.

The nobility had experienced still greater changes; it had lost, not only its ancient splendour, but even its existence; and was entirely decomposed. There were in France nearly thirty thousand noble families; a number not to be wondered at, since four thousand civil offices either gave or transmitted nobility, and the king daily granted letters of noblesse, which had been lavished to such a degree in the succession war, that they were sold at two thousand crowns a-piece. Out of this great number there were about a thousand families whose
origin

origin was lost in the remote periods of the French monarchy: of these, scarcely two or three hundred had escaped indigence and misfortune. There were still to be met with at court names which brought to mind the memory of those great characters who had once rendered them illustrious, but the possessors seldom recalled the idea of their virtues. In the provinces, likewise, there existed families who still maintained their consequence, either by having preserved the possessions of their ancestors, or by having repaired the loss of fortune by plebeian alliances. The rest of this ancient nobility was languishing in poverty. It resembled those venerable oaks which, mutilated by time, present no other relics than a naked trunk. No longer summoned for military service, or convoked either to the provincial states, or to those of the nation, the ancient constitution of this order was entirely lost. If honorary titles were borne by some old and illustrious families, they were likewise shared by a multitude of new nobles, who, by their riches, had acquired

1788.

1788. the right of assuming them arbitrarily. The greatest part of the large landed estates was become the property of financiers and merchants, or their descendants: the fiefs were principally in the hands of the bourgeois of towns. In short, the nobility had nothing to distinguish them from the other class of citizens, but such favours as the court chose to confer upon them, and exemptions from taxes, less advantageous to themselves than burdensome to the state, and offensive to the people. Nothing of their ancient dignity and consequence remained, except the hatred and jealousy to the commonalty.

Such was the situation of the nobility of France at the epoch of which I am speaking; I must, however, except that of Bretagne, which, by means of its particular government, still preserved its honorary prerogatives.

But what the nobility and clergy had lost of their riches, powers, and importance,

ance, had been gained by the third estate. 1788.
Since the reign of Henry the Fourth, and consequently since the last assembly of the States General in 1614, France had formed settlements in America, had established a maritime commerce, created manufactures, and in a manner rendered all Europe and other parts of the world tributary to her industry. The immense riches which by this means flowed in upon the kingdom fell entirely into the hands of the plebeian class, the prejudices of the nobility preventing them either from engaging in trade, or practising any mechanic or liberal art. The introduction of these riches, by increasing the quantity of specie, had even tended to impoverish the nobles, as well as land-holders in general. Cities, however, were considerably augmented. Commercial towns were established, such as Lyons, Nantes, Bourdeaux, and Marseilles, which equalled the capitals of many neighbouring states. Paris was increased to an alarming size; and whilst the nobility quitted their country seats, and hastened

to

1788.

to the metropolis to dissipate their property, the inferior ranks of the people, by their industry, found there new sources of opulence. All the little provincial towns were become more or less commercial; almost all were distinguished by some particular manufacture or commodity. All were peopled with little burghesses who, or their fathers before them, had found means, when they could not undertake large speculations, to enrich themselves by the management or tenantry of the fiefs and estates of great proprietors or nobles. They had in general received somewhat of an education, which was to them more necessary than to the nobility, some of whom, by their birth and riches, obtained the first employments of the state, without merit or talents, whilst others were left to languish out their days in the subordinate stations of the army. Thus, at Paris, and in all the great towns, the commercial part of society was superior to the nobility in wealth, in talents, and in personal merit: in the provincial towns, likewise, they possessed the same advantage;
of

of this they were perfectly sensible, yet 1788. were they every where considered in a humiliating light; they saw themselves, by the military regulations, excluded from all employment in the army; they were likewise, in some measure, shut out from high ecclesiastical preferments, the bishops being always chosen from among the first class of the nobility, and the grand vicars in general from members of that order. The third estate was likewise inadmissible to many of the cathedral chapters. In the same manner they were excluded from the higher class of the magistracy, the major part of the sovereign courts admitting only the nobility into their bodies; even for the office of master of the requests, the first step in the council of state, which led to the high posts of superintendants, and had conducted the Colberts, the Louvois, and so many other celebrated men, to the superior departments in the ministry, in more modern times proofs of nobility were required. Thus, after having deprived the
ancient

1788. ancient nobility of those of their prerogatives which were necessary in a monarchy, they were indulged with privileges which were pernicious to society.

Such were the changes that had taken place in the nation, when by its unanimous voice the convocation of the States General was so loudly called for, that the government, the weakest which had for a long time existed, found itself obliged to comply. I shall not here speak of the public opinion, which, in the cities and great towns, but particularly at Paris, and even among the inhabitants of the country in many provinces, was inclined to irreligion and licentiousness. In all ranks of people was remarked an aversion to the established authorities, and a contempt for the persons of those who exercised them. From this we may judge what the convocation of the States General must have produced, had it been possible to assemble them under the same form and composition as
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formerly;

formerly; we may likewise conceive the energy and address requisite on the part of government in such circumstances, not only to guide their labours towards useful objects, but even to prevent them from overturning every thing from the foundation.

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CHAP. IV.

Cardinal Loménie resigns.—He recommends to the king M. Neckar, who is appointed minister of the finances.—Principles and projects of Cardinal Loménie.—They are pursued by M. Neckar.—A second assembly of the Notables.—Their opinion concerning the composition of the States General.—Arret of the Parliament of Paris upon the same subject.—Convocation of the States General, and their composition.—My conversation with M. Neckar.—I am sent to resume my command at Metz.—Want of grain.—The causes and effects of this scarcity.

1788.

CARDINAL LOMÉNIE, terrified at the situation to which he saw France reduced, but still more alarmed at his own, abandoned the office of minister, which he had held during eight months, adding error to error and one imprudence to another.

another. He advised the king to have recourse again to Neckar, who was in possession of the public confidence, but not of that of this unhappy prince; who, however, entrusted him not only with the government of his kingdom, but likewise with his sceptre and his fortune.

1788.

This man, imprudent and ambitious, yet destitute of the temper and abilities necessary to direct a great revolution in the government, now perhaps become inevitable, adopted the principles of his predecessor in office.

Let me here be permitted to give a sketch of the plan which these two men had conceived, and which the latter put in execution: the errors of statesmen are sometimes of service to those who follow them, by pointing out the shoals upon which they have struck.

Cardinal Loménie, besides the calamities in which, during the short time he was in office,

1788. office, he had involved the kingdom, on resigning his employment left the seeds of still greater behind him, and these came to maturity under the administration of his successor. He not only inflamed the restless mind of the public, already much agitated, by proposing to the men of letters a question concerning the best forms and principles to be prescribed to the States General when assembled, but he was guilty of a still more mischievous error, in making use of the virtues of Louis the Sixteenth to erect the edifice of a philosophical government, the moral principle of which, deprived of the support of religious worship, the strongest of social ties, was founded upon the sufficiency of the light of reason to instruct the people in their duty, and the political basis of which was Equality.

To attain the object he had in view, he sought every opportunity of alienating the king's mind from the first orders of the state, with whose conduct his majesty was

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already

1788.

already displeased, and perhaps not without reason. He represented to him the inconveniencies which arose from the enormous prerogatives of the clergy; the rapacity of the great, and of his courtiers who devoured the substance of his people; the abuse which the nobility made of their privileges, and that of certain provinces which opposed him in his design of relieving his subjects by a just assessment of the taxes; and lastly, he reminded him of the refractory conduct of his parliaments; their exorbitant claims, and the danger that might be apprehended from their ambition when supported by the public opinion. It was not difficult to prove to the king that the rights, prerogatives, and even the spirit of these corporations formed an obstacle to the indulgence of his benevolence, which was his majesty's prevailing virtue; but it should likewise have been explained to him, that they were the pillars of the monarchy, whose very existence depended upon theirs; and that, however necessary it might be to correct the vices and abuses which had

1788. erept in among them, it was equally dangerous totally to abolish them.

Such were the prejudices with which this man first inspired the king, not only while he was in place, but after his resignation, having preserved a great influence by means of his credit with the queen, whose confidence he had found means to gain. Thus, the moral and religious virtues of Louis the Sixteenth were made subservient to the relaxed principles of a philosopher and an atheist.

Neckar, with stricter morals, had the same political principles, and these had been strengthened by the experience he had acquired under his former administration. During that period, in the execution of his projects of financial reform, he had to encounter the opposition of the parliaments and privileged bodies, and was at last sacrificed to the cabals of the court. This then he judged a favourable moment to humble, and even annihilate the first orders
of

of the state. He thought, no doubt, that the middling class of the people, humiliated and jealous of the prerogatives enjoyed by these orders, would easily accomplish what the government dared not undertake.

1788.

With respect to the parliaments, all that was necessary to crush the power newly erected by them was, in the approaching assembly of the States General, to give a preponderating influence to the third estate, and to render these meetings periodical. Becoming then only a popular assembly, the States General, he imagined, might be made the instruments of his ambition, and the supporters of his plan for the restoration of the finances.

Neckar viewed France with the eyes of a citizen of Geneva; and Louis, already prepossessed, saw it through those of his minister; he readily adopted his fatal system, and the monarch placed himself at the head of a conspiracy against the monarchy,

1788. which he sacrificed in the hope of making his subjects more happy; for never prince loved his people better, as no one ever more fully experienced their ingratitude.

Frenchmen! when I reflect on the crimes with which a great number of you are polluted, my pen drops from my hand! With what savage barbarity did you treat the most humane, the most benevolent of princes, and the best of men! What sacrifices did he not make, if not for your happiness, at least to comply with your wishes!

If these are effaced from your memory, I will remind you of them. On his accession to the throne, you earnestly desired the restoration of the parliaments which Louis the Fifteenth had been obliged to abolish: this he granted. The ministers he chose appeared to him to be men of the greatest wisdom, integrity, and abilities; and such he always sought during the whole of his reign: if he sometimes
erred,

erred, it was the public opinion which
milled him. He abolished the *corvée**, and
changed the ancient penal code, which still
contained too many vestiges of the igno-
rance and barbarity of your forefathers.
He first tried the experiment of provincial
administrations, which he wished to esta-
blish over the whole kingdom, for the pur-
pose of introducing œconomy into the
collection of the public taxes, and to pre-
vent partiality in levying and assessing them.
He destroyed the abuse of *lettres de cachet*,
a moderate use of which your prejudices
rendered still necessary. He emptied the
state prisons, which soon contained only men
dangerous to society, confined from motives
of humanity. Constantly studying the ease
and happiness of his people, he assembled
the Notables of the kingdom, to prepare
the means of accomplishing his purpose.
You have seen with what ardour he desired

* A law by which the peasantry were compelled to
employ their own labour and cattle in repairing the
roads, without receiving any recompence.

1788. the abolition of the *gabelle**, and other taxes of a burthensome nature; if this was not effected, the fault must not be imputed to him.

In the midst of the most corrupt court he preserved the purest morals, a mild and enlightened piety in the midst of irreligion and atheism, and personal economy in the midst of unbounded luxury. Ever steady in the principles of goodness, and ever ready to comply with your requests, he freely consented again to assemble the States General, which the policy, or rather the wisdom and prudence; of his predecessors had long discontinued. He resigned into the hands of your representatives, intoxicated with the fumes of liberty, his sovereign authority, desiring only to reserve the portion necessary to secure your happiness; they stripped him even of that,

* By the *gabelle*, every person was compelled, either to take a certain quantity of salt, or to buy it at an arbitrary price, which was different in many provinces.

whilst

whilst a licentious and ungovernable mob insulted him and threatened his palace. Witness the 14th of July, and the 5th of October, when, still more insolent and outrageous, they came to tear him from his residence by force. He was earnestly solicited to put himself at the head of his troops, to escape from and repress their fury. He could have done it, and he would then have disconcerted all the projects of those conspirators who have involved you in guilt; but from motives of humanity he refused. He was dragged like a criminal to your capital, where the palace of his ancestors became his prison; loaded with injuries and insults, his life and that of his family were continually in danger; the bitterest reproaches and most indecent invectives were heaped upon them. Eluding at last the vigilance of the villains who meditated his death, he escaped from their hands, wishing to save them from the commission of still greater crimes. Far from the walls of Paris he sought a place of refuge whence he might
make

1788. make you hear the voice of reason, and explain to you your real interest: but he was arrested as a fugitive, reconducted to his prison, and from thence, being first stripped of his sceptre and his crown, after a long and strict confinement, he was led to the scaffold. His august head fell under the hands of the executioner, and the same fate awaited that part of his family which remained still exposed to the barbarity of his sanguinary judges. The Athenians, whom you formerly resembled in politeness, in the elegance of your manners, and in the delicacy and subtilty of your wit, but whom you now much more resemble in levity and cruelty, put to death Socrates the wisest of men, and they repented of it; you have deprived of life the most virtuous of kings, and still celebrate the anniversary of a day which fixed upon the French nation a stain that no time can efface, nor all the laurels of your conquering chiefs can cover from the eyes of astonished and terrified posterity. Prove at least by your repentance, that the
crime

crime of a few was not that of all; show that, enchained by the tyrants who then governed, and whose crimes Divine vengeance has already punished, the French nation has not been the accomplice to their monstrous cruelties, but the passive instrument, or rather the victim, of their sanguinary ambition!

I now resume the narrative of those events which led to this great, this dreadful catastrophe.

Whether Neckar hesitated to put in execution the plan he had conceived or adopted, whether he foresaw the danger of it, or whether he wished to obtain information with respect to the nature and form of the States General, previous to their convocation, he called an assembly of the Notables, composed of the same members as the preceding, and to their consideration he submitted several questions concerning the manner of their convocation, their formation and composition.

The

1788.

The Notables, who when before assembled had done not the least good, now caused much mischief. It is true they opposed the double representation of the third estate, which would undoubtedly have been a great evil, though imperiously demanded by the plebeians. The assembly of the Notables consisted of seven divisions called *Bureaux* and in one of these only was this measure approved of, and even in that by a majority of no more than a single vote. It was the *bureau* at which Monsieur presided. The democratical form for the national representation was that which the assembly adopted, granting all the members of the three orders, without respect to property or possessions, the right of being eligible as electors and members. This opinion of the Notables was supported by the parliament of Paris, which having first demanded that the States General should be formed upon the same principles as in 1614, passed, on the 7th of December, at the moment of the breaking up of the assembly

assembly of the Notables, a decree which contained principles entirely opposite to those they had maintained in the former. They demanded the periodical assembly of the States General; an obligation on the part of government to levy no taxes without their consent; and that a connexion should be established between the States General and the parliaments, who should be pledged to the execution of the laws by them enacted. They demanded the abolition of *lettres de cachet*; that ministers should be rendered responsible, not only to the States General, but likewise to the solicitors general of the parliaments; and lastly, they demanded the liberty of the press. What was singular in this decree, was its stating that the parliament did not pretend to point out the form in which the States General should be convoked, nor the number of deputies of which it ought to consist, leaving these to the wisdom and discretion of his majesty; observing only that regard ought to be paid to the changes which had

1788. had taken place in the government, the manners, and even the customs of the nation since the year 1614. It is undoubtedly matter of surprise to see the parliaments, on the present occasion, pursue a conduct so opposite to that which they had formerly adopted; but these assemblies were divided into two parties: the old members desired a revolution in the government, which might satisfy the ambitious views of their body by procuring them admission to a share in the legislative part of the sovereignty: the younger members, on the contrary, wished for a general revolution, which might satisfy their personal ambition. The latter, in the present instance, gained the superiority over the former, and the decree of the 7th of December was prepared at the club known by the appellation of the *Enragés*, formed this year by the duke of Orleans, and to which he had associated the most factious members of the parliaments. Amongst others were
Déspré-

Déspréménil, Dupont, Sémonville, St. Fargeau, &c. the instruments so successfully made use of by Orleans in the formation of his conspiracy, but discarded by him as useless and even obstacles to the execution of his projects when they advanced towards maturity. I am the more confirmed in the opinion, that the above decree was dictated by the younger members of the parliament of Paris, from a conversation which I had with M. d'Ormesson, first president of that assembly. The country seat of this gentleman lay contiguous to mine. He was a man of the most distinguished virtue, and had preserved that purity of manners which characterised the ancient members of the French magistracy.

A few days after passing the above decree, I asked him how the members of his body came to take a step so inconsistent, so unreasonable, and so pregnant with mischief. He assured me, that it had reduced all the ancient magistrates to

VOL. I. G despair;

1788. despair; they had, he said, opposed it with all their might, but they had been overpowered by the numbers and fury of the young members who domineered in their assembly: that their body was at present merely a democracy governed by striplings. This may serve as an excuse for the conduct which the magistrature had long pursued.

Neckar in the mean time, supported by the consent of his majesty, the opinion of the Notables, of the parliaments, and the public, on the 27th of December presented to the king's council, his plan for the new composition of the States General. This was approved of, and the first of May appointed for the opening of that assembly. The election was fixed for the month of March, and the States General were to be convened at Versailles. Neckar had proposed that they should meet at Paris, but the ministers saw many reasons for preferring Versailles, and this was the only change they made in his plan. Some friends

friends of Neckar, worthy and enlightened men, endeavoured to point out to him the inconveniences of the principles which he had laid down for the formation of the States General; they proposed several useful changes and modifications, which he constantly refused to adopt, either through blindness or obstinacy. He was advised to make use of his influence in the elections, in order that government might have some partisans in the assembly of the States; this he rejected from the immorality of such a step; for the same reason he declined listening to a proposal made him a short time after, of gaining over some of the most virulent members of that assembly.

If Neckar was an ambitious man, I by no means think him a man of vicious principles; but he was unacquainted with men, and measured them all with a philosophical compass*.

A con-

* Neckar's grand error undoubtedly was excluding the king from the States General, instead of rendering

him

1789.

A conversation I had with this minister in the month January 1789, which was the last, as I have never seen him since, confirmed

him their arbiter. He should, then, in the declaration for convoking them have specified the object for which they were assembled; he should (which was very easy) have foreseen and provided against the difficulties likely to occur: the principal of these were to define the powers of the deputies, and to determine whether the three orders should deliberate jointly or separately. The first of these questions should have been submitted to the government; and with respect to the second, the cases should have been pointed out, in which the assembly should be united, and those in which it should separate into orders. This was perfectly conformable to the genius and nature of the States General. Necker should at least have persuaded the king to make at the opening of this assembly the concessions imposed upon him by necessity; the deputies being uniformly instructed by their constituents to demand, that reasonable bounds should be set to the royal authority, and that the existing abuses should be reformed. Lastly, the king should have published on the 4th of May 1789, the declaration which was in a manner extorted from him on the 23d of June following. The great art of government, in such circumstances, is to grant in good time that which can no longer be retained; to cede that voluntarily, which will soon be wrested by force. To seize the proper moment for such sacrifices is extremely difficult, and it is to a failure of judgment in

confirmed my conjectures concerning his projects, and the consequences he expected to result from them. I represented to him with force, and with truth, the danger of assembling the States General in the manner he intended. I told him that he was arming the people against the first orders of the state, and that when thus delivered up unarmed, they would soon feel the effects of their vengeance, urged on by the two most active passions of the human heart, interest and self-love. I entered into particulars, but he coldly answered me, raising his eyes to heaven, that it was necessary to rely on the moral virtues of mankind. I replied, that this was a fine romance, but he would see a horrible and bloody tragedy, of which I advised him to avoid the catastrophe. At this he

1789.

in this respect, that we may attribute almost all revolutions. These may be prevented; but when once begun, it is hard indeed to stop their progress. May the government of France be the last instance of the truth of this maxim!

1789.

smiled, and Madame Neckar told me that my apprehensions were extravagant.

The ambassador from Sweden, Baron de Staal, at the beginning of this year, proposed to me by the desire of his sovereign, who was at war with Russia, a command in the Swedish service. I accepted this offer, provided I could obtain the king's consent.

Baron de Staal was son-in-law to M. Neckar, who, as well as his partizans, at the head of whom were La Fayette and the Lameths, feared probably I should oppose their revolutionary projects, which I had done in a very open and energetic manner in the last assembly of the Notables, and in the conversations which I previously had with them at the house of M^e de Staal. It was with pain they saw me at the head of an army and master of Metz, a well fortified town, one of the principal arsenals of the kingdom, and about 70 leagues

leagues from Paris; and, without doubt, they suggested to the Swedish ambassador the above method of procuring my absence. 1789. On my part, I saw a terrible storm ready to burst over the kingdom, and dreaded the consequence. I was desirous to avoid being engaged in the troubles which appeared to me inevitable; particularly, I was apprehensive of a civil war, which struck me with horror. Besides, I knew that I had in some degree incurred the displeasure of the king and queen, by the attachment which, in the last assembly of the Notables, I had strongly expressed to the ancient principles of the monarchy. For these reasons then, I joyfully seized the opportunity of leaving France with honour. I hoped by this means to escape the difficulties and anxieties which I then feared, and have since experienced.

About a fortnight after this proposal had been made me by M^e de Staal, I received, as well as all the commandants of provinces, orders to repair on the 1st of March

1789.

to my government, to preserve tranquillity during the election of members to the States General. This order I obeyed, and heard no more either of the ambassador or the king of Sweden.

Neckar, faithful to his principles, suffered a fermentation to be excited among the people, by writings dispersed through the provinces, calculated to prepare the public mind for a revolution. The States General consisted of men very proper for the execution of his purposes. The ecclesiastical members were principally chosen from among the inferior clergy, without livings or property: opposed to those of the higher order, who were fewer in number. Among the representatives of the nobility were many of those subtle, daring, enterprising men, who had introduced themselves with a view to corrupt and divide that order: lastly, the third estate were allowed a double representation.

This

15 This assembly was open to that description of men, so numerous and so dangerous in France, who lived by their talents, their literary abilities, and their industry, deriving their importance from the weakness and credulity of mankind. Lawyers, principally of the lowest class, physicians, artists, writers of little or no eminence, and men without either rank or property; such were those who now represented, or were eligible to represent the French nation*; that nation whose passions, already in a state of fermentation, they strove still more to inflame. 1789.

Thence began the revolution, for which the progressive depravity of manners had so long been preparing the way.

* Of 300 members which represented the clergy, 208 were possessed of no ecclesiastical dignity; of 600 members who represented the *tiers état*, 374 were professors of the law. In this number, there were certainly some known before the revolution for their merit and abilities, of whom were M. Mounier and M. Malouet, both distinguished for their wisdom and moderation.

During

1789.

During the first part of my residence at Metz, whilst the capital and provinces were agitated by troubles and disorders, I was entirely engaged in maintaining tranquillity within my own department, where, however, all my efforts could not prevent frequent insurrections. I likewise employed myself in preserving discipline among the troops, and retaining them in their fidelity to their sovereign. I succeeded in both.

Whilst I commanded at Metz, not one person was assassinated; property in the towns, as well as in the country, remained inviolate: not a seat was burnt, nor any nobleman, or land-holder, exposed to the fury of the people, which evaporated in empty threats. For the first twelve months of the revolution, I was so happy as to preserve among the twenty thousand men I had under my command, the same temper of mind as formerly.

In the months of April and May 1789, a scarcity of provisions was experienced at
Paris,

Paris, and in almost all the provinces. Under the administration of Cardinal Loménie, the exportation of corn out of the kingdom had been permitted, and the harvest had been bad the preceding year: no doubt, artful means were employed to prevent the different provinces from supplying each other with corn, and to support the monopoly of provisions. 1789.

Of this, some have accused the duke of Orleans; others M. Neckar himself, which, however, I do not believe, though this I must say, that having at Metz, and in the province under my command, corn sufficient to subsist the troops, amounting to twenty thousand men, for eighteen months, on being pressed by the people, whose provisions were almost totally exhausted, and still more by the administrative bodies, who could not possibly supply them, I proposed to the government to distribute the half of this grain among the towns and villages, on condition of again receiving it the ensuing harvest; which might have been done

6 without

1789. without any inconvenience, yet was rejected: notwithstanding this refusal of the ministry, I resolved, however, to execute my project, and for this I was afterwards thanked by M. Neckar himself, though he at first refused his consent to the measure.

The scarcity of corn, which threatened the people with famine, was the reason given for the insurrections which took place throughout the whole kingdom, from the time of the meeting of the States General, till the fourteenth of July, and the retreat of the troops assembled under *maréchal Broglio* in the environs of Paris: from that time quite different motives were assigned; the fear of a counter-revolution by the aristocrats, the principal part of whom had already fled into other countries; apprehensions lest foreign armies should enter France: these were the pretexts made use of to alarm the people and keep them in continual agitation; it was from this period that they took arms in every part of France, forming themselves into companies, battalions,

talions, and regiments, under the name of national guards; nor did the government think it prudent to oppose this popular torrent, but distributed among the people musquets from the arsenals, and even cannon, which they demanded in a manner that shewed they would not bear a refusal.

1789.

Finding myself in a very critical situation, I wrote to the minister for instructions relative to my future conduct, having hitherto constantly refused to distribute the arms from those considerable arsenals which were at my disposal. The new war minister M. de la Tour du Pin (for a change had at this time taken place in the ministry) wrote me the following letter:

“ Sir, Versailles, Aug. 26, 1789.

“ The letter you did me the honour to

“ write, I received the 12th of this month;

“ and conceive myself obliged by the par-

“ ticular account you give me of the state of

“ affairs in the province of *Les Evêchés*;

“ your conduct in every respect is worthy

“ of the highest commendation; it is easy to

“ perceive

1789.

" perceive that you have acted in every in-
 " stance as circumstances directed, and that
 " all your steps have been guided by the
 " strictest rules of prudence. I can only
 " beg of you to continue the same care and
 " precautions, to preserve the public tran-
 " quillity, and maintain harmony between
 " the military and the citizens. * Be assured,
 " sir, that I carefully lay before his majesty
 " whatever letters I receive from you; but,
 " in the present circumstances, it is impos-
 " sible to give you any positive instructions;
 " the king relies entirely on the discretion
 " of the commandants of the different pro-
 " vinces, to act in the best manner possible
 " for the benefit of his service: one thing
 " is essential, and you will easily feel the
 " importance of it, that is, to be extremely
 " cautious in the distribution of arms. For
 " whatever else concerns this subject, or the
 " service in general, it is impossible to do
 " better, than to refer all to your zeal and
 " prudence. I am, sir, with sentiments
 " of great esteem,

" Your very humble servant,

" LA TOUR DU PIN."

By

By this letter I was authorised to distribute arms to the people, but no rules were laid down for my conduct in general; I resolved then to be directed by circumstances, and to wait patiently till I had an opportunity of acting with energy and effect.

1789.

M
1789.
With rapid steps, bearing down every obstacle in its progress to subvert the monarchy and dissolve all social order. The ancient feudal system was destroyed, every principle of the established form of government was attacked; on the 4th of October the king, assisted in his palace by the people, at the instigation of the leading members of the national representation; after his guards had been dispersed and massacred, was led prisoner to Paris and confined in the Temple, where he daily suffered the insults of the populace. All France

CHAP. V.

Situation of France in the month of October

1789.—Circumstances in which I found myself at Metz.—Overtures made me by La Fayette.—Beginning of my correspondence with him.—His projects.

1789. MEANTIME, the revolution advanced with rapid steps, bearing down every obstacle in its progress to subvert the monarchy and dissolve all social order. The ancient feudal system was destroyed, every principle of the established form of government was attacked: on the fifth of October the king, assaulted in his palace by the people, at the instigation of the leading members of the national representation; after his guards had been dispersed and massacred, was led prisoner to Paris and confined in the Thuilleries, where he daily suffered the insults of the populace. All France

France was in arms. The nobility, pursued by their vassals, were compelled to fly, abandoning their castles and property, which they saw a prey to the flames or to plunderers. The clergy, terrified and confounded, awaited the sentence which should condemn them to death. The magistrates, astonished, saw themselves deposed from their authority, the laws overturned and their power annihilated; every spring of the administration was broken, and the *sans culottes* governed, in the name of the nation, the constitution and the assembly, which was daily destroying the ancient laws and enacting new ones, dictated by its factious members. Lastly, the doctrine of the rights of man * was broached and publicly taught. This, by the manner in which it was applied by the people, and in which

1789.

* The question concerning the rights of man being taken into consideration by the thirty *bureaux*, into which the assembly was divided, twenty-eight of them rejected it. Deputy Bouche then proposed, that the subject should be discussed by the whole assembly united, when it was carried merely through the interference of the galleries.

1789. it was natural to suppose they would apply it, dissolved every tie of social order; and with the same consequences will it be attended in every government where effectual means are not employed to counteract its baneful effects.

Neckar himself, having let slip the reins of government, was tossed about, the sport of the different parties. La Fayette, having taken advantage of the crimes of the duke of Orleans, was become master of the king's person, and in a manner sovereign of Paris, where he was at the head of a numerous militia, and might have disposed of the assembly who were confined within the walls of that city, as he pleased; his authority, likewise, was great throughout all the provinces, and even over part of the army. Such was the situation of France in the month of November 1789, six months after the convocation of the States General.

During these transactions I resided constantly at Metz, hated by the people, but
having

1789.

having the most perfect reliance on my army, between which and the inhabitants of the town I maintained a constant jealousy, inspiring it at the same time with contempt for the lower class of the people. I had no guide for my conduct, the government being too feeble for such circumstances, and, as may easily be imagined, giving me neither orders nor instructions. I was ignorant of the king's intentions, though certain they must be materially changed after what he had experienced. Having adopted no party, having no communication with any, an object of apprehension and distrust to all, insulated in the midst of the revolution, I was regarded as an enemy to what was called the constitution, having refused to take the prescribed oath, though I had by the king's desire tendered it to the troops; perceiving the impossibility of remedying the evil which had been occasioned, and desirous of acting in concert with those possessed of the inclination, power, courage, and abilities to re-establish a monarchy on a basis conformable to the existing circumstances;

1789. stances; I determined, if I could not effect that, to quit France, and go in quest of another country. Such was my situation and intentions at that time.

I was the more particularly confirmed in the resolution I had formed, as I found myself daily denounced to the assembly as an aristocrat. I was, however, set at ease with regard to my conduct by the following letter from the minister, to whom I had communicated my fears :

“ Sir, Versailles, Oct. 29, 1789.
 “ The letter with which you honoured
 “ me came safe to hand the 22d of last
 “ month. The accusation which has been
 “ preferred against you in the national as-
 “ sembly, was a mere effort of your ene-
 “ mies; no further notice has been taken of
 “ it, and you may rest perfectly secure upon
 “ that point. The wise and prudent con-
 “ duct you have constantly observed since
 “ you were appointed commandant of *les*
 “ *Evêchés*, the care you have constantly
 “ taken

“ taken to preserve order and tranquility in
 “ that province, and the justice which has 1789.
 “ been done you by the committee of Metz,
 “ are a security for your conduct, both to
 “ the king and the nation, leaving no doubt
 “ of your attachment to your country, and
 “ your zeal for the public welfare.

“ I have the honour to be, Sir,

“ Your very humble servant,

“ LA TOUR DU PIN.”

Such was my perplexity and uncertainty, when the Marquis du Chastelet, a well known person, who had long been attached to me, and under obligations to me, who was a friend and aid-du-camp to Mons. la Fayette, wrote me the following letter*.—

This letter is without date.

“ I am charged, my general, with a
 “ commission to you, for the success of
 “ which I have undertaken to answer, as it
 “ is to solicit your support of a measure, the

* The originals of all the letters transcribed in these memoirs are now in my possession, and have been communicated to the editor.

1789.

" motive to which is as honourable as con-
" ducive to the public good. You certainly
" have correspondents sufficiently exact, to
" be informed of the events which have
" taken place; you know that they have
" raised La Fayette to the summit of power,
" and that by his firmness he has just got
" rid of the duke of Orleans. But not-
" withstanding this success against the
" most formidable of the factious, he is
" aware that we have still much to appre-
" hend both from intestine commotions,
" and perhaps foreign attacks. He is of
" opinion, that at this moment all honest
" Frenchmen ought to unite in the defence
" of the king and the constitution; and has
" no doubt, that in case of necessity, your
" hearty co-operation may be depended
" upon. He intends shortly to write to
" you himself, and I hope his conduct will
" remove any suspicions you may entertain
" of his sincerity. I myself was not with-
" out my doubts concerning him, but I
" have carefully marked his conduct on
" every occasion, and have reason to be-
" lieve

“ lieve him a man of perfect integrity. 1789.
“ When, sometime since, it was apprehend-
“ ed that the enemies of liberty would re-
“ ceive support from foreign powers, doubts
“ were raised as to the propriety of intrust-
“ ing you with the command of the army,
“ and I was asked whether I would answer
“ for the use you would make of it; my
“ reply was, Once engage his word, and I
“ will answer with my life for his observ-
“ ance of it. I now repeat the same
“ assertion to you with respect to La Fay-
“ ette. I am earnestly desirous that my
“ opinion should have some weight with
“ you, as I consider the safety of the state
“ to depend entirely on an intimate union
“ between you and M. de la Fayette; but
“ whatever be the result of it, you know
“ me sufficiently I hope, to do justice to
“ the sentiments by which I am actuated.”

This letter, however, did not release me from my painful situation. La Fayette was my near relation; I had known him from his infancy, and had observed his

1789. conduct since his entrance into life: I feared his suspicious, dissembling disposition, more than his ambition, which I should have been happy to see satisfied, had he been desirous of saving the king, the monarchy, and his country, by arresting the further progress of the revolution, and establishing the government upon principles suited to France, and to the genius of its inhabitants. This, la Fayette could have done, and at that time he was the only man possessed of the power and means of accomplishing it: but his ambition was without genius or energy to direct it. His only desire was to be conspicuous on the theatre of the world, and to make himself the subject of conversation; he was neither an unprincipled man, nor a man of depraved morals, but he was not equal to the important situation to which he found himself raised. He did not love me, I had often spoken to him with great freedom; and a year or two before had reproached him with those revolutionary principles which he entertained, telling

telling him they would inevitably involve him in ruin, after having probably brought many calamities upon his country.

1789.

After having taken some time to reflect, I sent the following answer to the letter I had received from M. du Chastelet. Though I only spoke in general terms, yet the overtures I made were sufficient to let M. de la Fayette see, had he been really desirous of acting in concert with me, that he might communicate to me his plans and the means he possessed for putting them in execution.

“ Sir,

Metz, Oct. 30, 1789.

“ I have to ask pardon for having so long delayed answering your letter, but the importance of the matter it contained required time for mature deliberation. As I believe you to be a man of integrity and attached to your sovereign, I shall therefore speak to you without reserve.

“ I have

1789.

" I have long beheld with the deepest
" concern the misfortunes with which my
" country is afflicted; their approach I had
" for some time foreseen; of this you can
" have no doubt if you will call to mind
" some of the conversations we had toge-
" ther last winter. Though equally an
" enemy to despotism with you or even
" with M. de la Fayette himself, yet I
" dreaded the disorder and anarchy which
" must result from the composition of the
" States General, in which public spirit
" could not possibly prevail. My fears
" have been realized: the kingdom is
" rapidly advancing towards its destruc-
" tion: a sincere union of all honest
" Frenchmen possessed of courage and
" power may yet perhaps save it; at least
" they ought to make a last effort. Such
" are the principles by which my conduct
" shall be guided in the present unhappy
" state of affairs; let then men of pure and
" upright intentions, possessing the requi-
" site power and courage, come forward,

" I will join them, and if they fall, I will
" fall with them. 1789.

" I have long thought that the fate of
" France lay in the hands of the duke of
" Orleans and M. de la Fayette. The for-
" mer, I thought, by his rank and birth,
" must be interested in her preservation
" and happiness; his conduct in the late
" events has undeceived me, and con-
" vinced me that nothing but evil was to
" be expected from him. M. de la Fay-
" ette then still remains, and in possession
" of increased power. I am not acquaint-
" ed with the principles upon which he
" acts, but let him impart them to me,
" and if I find them such as you describe,
" and such as I wish them to be, I will
" most sincerely second his efforts to snatch
" our country from ruin: laying aside
" ambition, self-interest, and even self-
" love; he, and every one who has this
" great object in view, may rely on my
" courage, my zeal for the public good,
" and my fidelity in the performance of
" my

1789.

“ my engagements. But, though I should
“ not wish the re-establishment of that ar-
“ bitrary power under which I was born,
“ and under which I have lived, yet I am
“ still a greater enemy to the anarchy and
“ disorder which reign at present. I wish
“ to live under a government capable of
“ securing us from foreign attacks, and in-
“ suring domestic tranquility; liberty under
“ such a government must consequently
“ be confined within reasonable bounds;
“ this might have been effected a short time
“ since, and is perhaps even yet possible.

“ This, Sir, is my confession of faith;
“ you are at liberty to communicate it to
“ M. de la Fayette. If my sentiments are
“ conformable to his, and if he will com-
“ municate them with that candour and sin-
“ cerity which ought to characterise us
“ both, we shall soon be united. Tramp-
“ ling under foot those little prejudices
“ which at present separate us, we will la-
“ bour to accomplish the same end, and
“ with that unanimity which ought to exist
“ between

" between two men equally animated with
" public spirit, whose only ambition should
" be the preservation of their endanger-
" ed country. My conduct towards M.
" de la Fayette shall be regulated then by
" his, and of this you will oblige me by
" informing him. I am, Sir,

1789.

" Your very humble servant,

" LE MARQUIS DE BOUILLE."

I was several days without hearing any thing of M. de la Fayette. I wrote to him for the purpose of claiming some deserters who had enlisted among the Parisian troops, and to demand restitution of the arms and accoutrements of the regiment of Nassau, which had been taken by the people of Paris, when that regiment was sent to Versailles in the month of July last. In this letter I took occasion to mention to him the means he, by his situation, possessed of saving his country. If invited, I told him numbers would step forth in such a cause, and flock to support him. Still however he remained silent.

I wrote

1789.

I wrote to his friend expressing my surprise, and reproaching him with having deceived me: I intimated to him my suspicions that the step he had taken was not by the desire of M. de la Fayette. To this letter I received the following answer, which gives a tolerably good description of the latter, and explains the reasons of his extreme distrust, which I never was able to conquer. It likewise contains several particulars of a very interesting nature.

Paris, Nov. 10, 1789.

“ Your letter, my general, obliges me
“ to give you a particular account of my
“ conduct towards you and towards M.
“ de la Fayette, and the nature of my
“ connexion with him, which is as follows: I had known M. de la Fayette
“ from my infancy, in America and at
“ Paris: I was by no means upon intimate
“ terms with him, and from public report
“ had formed no very favourable opinion
“ of the purity of his principles. The
“ conformity of our sentiments upon the
“ present state of affairs, however, frequently

“quently introduced me to him last winter, and his conduct then seemed to me perfectly honourable. At the time of the revolution, which took place in the month of July, wishing to see the ruins of the Bastille, I applied to him for permission: he was then at the Hotel de Ville, on a secret committee; he proposed to me to remain there, and to say for a pretext that I was his aide-de-camp. As a return for his politeness, I thought myself under an obligation to attend him on horseback that and the following day; after which I told him that as any other might be equally useful to him as myself, I should decline any longer accompanying him; that I was always ready to draw my sword in the cause of Liberty; but not tediously to waste my time for her. I have since had frequent opportunities of seeing M. de la Fayette: he appears to me a man entirely occupied with the desire of placing his name at the head of the revolution, and of becoming the Washington of France, but
“without

1789.

“ without having recourse to unjustifiable
“ means. He seems to possess great pre-
“ sence of mind, a cool judgment, and
“ great activity, though in the choice of
“ his employment he has not displayed
“ much discernment; he shews, I think,
“ great address in availing himself of cir-
“ cumstances, but is deficient in genius to
“ create them; upon the whole, a man of
“ good principles and merit, but by no
“ means a great man. Such being my
“ opinion of M. de la Fayette, I earnestly
“ desired to cement an union between
“ you two; I thought some meddling in-
“ triguers might have purposely inspired
“ you with mutual distrust. Not long after
“ I had formed the design of attempting
“ this object, we were informed that Prus-
“ sian troops were entering the country
“ of Liege; these seemed to me destined
“ to act against us, and I mentioned it to
“ M. de la Fayette, who likewise was of
“ the same opinion. As his situation, in
“ some measure, placed the disposal of the
“ command of the army in his hands, I
“ asked

“ asked him what his intentions were upon
“ that subject: his answer was, that he
“ would advance M. de Rochambeau to
“ the command of it, though he thought
“ him much less proper for that station
“ than you; but, added he, I think there
“ would be great danger in entrusting the
“ army to a man, whose principles are so
“ widely different from those of the people
“ at large, as M. de Bouille’s: I am afraid
“ lest he should follow the example of
“ general Monk. To this I replied, that
“ your principles were not favourable to
“ despotism, but I was certain that in any
“ case you were incapable of abusing the
“ confidence that might be placed in you:
“ I assured him that I knew you well
“ enough to affirm, that your word would
“ be the best security for your conduct.

“ At the conclusion of this conversation
“ it was agreed that I should set out for
“ the purpose of knowing, whether in
“ case an army should be assembled you
“ would take the command of it. Since
“ that

1789. " that time, M. de la Fayette has frequently expressed to me a desire of coming to a clear understanding with you. When, at the beginning of last month, the people of Paris went to fetch the king from Versailles, where I then was, I saw the party of the duke of Orleans had such a superiority, that I fully expected both the king and M. de la Fayette would be murdered on the road. I went to Rambouillet, where were three hundred chasseurs of the regiment of Lorraine, intending to do all in my power to persuade them to join the party which should oppose the Orleans faction. However, the king arrived in safety at Paris, to which place I likewise repaired, and going to see M. de la Fayette, he confessed to me that his enemies were more powerful than he was: I advised him to disperse them without loss of time, to establish the dominion of reason by force, and to take charge of the constitution as he had before done of the revolution. A project

1789.

“ ject of so much importance as this ex-
“ ceeded his capacity; he told me that he
“ wished to try every method before he
“ proceeded to such extremities; that he
“ had thoughts of terrifying or buying
“ the duke of Orleans: I represented to
“ him that this would be only a temporary
“ expedient, and neither so short nor so
“ effectual as the plan I had just men-
“ tioned to him; he seemed convinced by
“ what I said, and immediately adopted it
“ with success. The following day he
“ sent to desire I would call on him;
“ after having informed me of all that had
“ just passed, he told me that he hoped
“ you would approve of his conduct;
“ he should avail himself, he said, of the
“ present conjuncture, to make you some
“ proposals; but requested me to write
“ first, adding that he himself would write
“ in a few days. On receiving your letter,
“ I sent it to him as you desired: I saw
“ him the same evening, and he com-
“ municated to me the particulars of his
“ answer. Being obliged to go into the
“ country,

1789.

“ country, on my return, which happened
“ about four or five days ago, he told me
“ that having heard nothing from you, he
“ was apprehensive his letter had miscar-
“ ried, or rather had been intercepted, as
“ he had reason to suspect some under-
“ hand practices at the post-office: he had,
“ he said, written to you again, and he
“ shewed me a letter which occupied four
“ pages. Yesterday I received that which
“ you did me the honour to write the
“ 15th of the present month: I acquaint-
“ ed him with the suspicions which his
“ silence had excited in you, he appeared
“ to me very uneasy about the fate of his
“ letters; I advised him to enclose the se-
“ cond under cover to your son: whether
“ that has met with any better success I do
“ not know. This, Sir, is an exact ac-
“ count of my whole conduct, which
“ thinking it by no means merits those
“ suspicions which you seem to have en-
“ tertained of it, I will take the liberty
“ of adding, that it becomes daily more
“ necessary that your son should take a
“ trip

“ trip to Paris for a short time, in order
 “ that you may know in what manner to
 “ act with respect to several objects of
 “ importance, particularly the war, for
 “ that we shall have one I believe more
 “ firmly than ever. I am, Sir, with the
 “ greatest respect,” &c. 1789.

At last I received the following letter from La Fayette himself. I have suppressed two large pages which related only to the deserters, and arms and accoutrements of the regiment of Nassau, which were the apparent subject, but not the object, of my letter.

“ Paris, Nov. 15, 1789.

“ Thus much, my dear cousin, for private affairs; but there is a general concern which ought to interest and unite all good citizens, whatever may have been their political opinions. We both were lovers of liberty; a greater dose of it was necessary for me than you, and I wished to obtain it by the people, and

1789.

“ with the people. This revolution then
“ is effected, which should give you the
“ less concern as you never seemed desir-
“ ous of taking any part in it. But now
“ we both dread the same calamities,
“ anarchy, civil dissension, and the an-
“ nihilation of all government; we desire
“ too the same happy events, namely,
“ public credit re-established, constitu-
“ tional liberty fixed upon a firm and solid
“ basis, order restored, and the executive
“ power capable of acting with energy
“ and effect. A counter-revolution being
“ happily impossible; and indeed now cri-
“ minal, since it must unavoidably bring
“ on a civil war, and, in spite of every
“ effort to prevent it, would certainly be
“ attended with the massacre of the weaker
“ party; such then being the consequence,
“ every virtuous, every upright citizen is
“ interested in preserving the constitution
“ in its present state: of this truth the king
“ is sensible, and I should think every
“ reasonable man must be of the same
“ opinion.

“ The

" The national assembly, which at Ver-
 " failles was constantly demolishing, at 1789.
 " Paris seems busy in erecting a new
 " edifice; and its conduct may be expect-
 " ed to be the more moderate, as all pre-
 " text for distrust and jealousy is in a fair
 " way of being removed; and would
 " you, my dear cousin, openly avow your
 " attachment to the new constitution,
 " you would be enabled more effect-
 " ually to promote the welfare of your
 " country.

" With respect to myself, whom cir-
 " cumstances and the confidence of the
 " people have raised to a degree of re-
 " sponsibility much superior to my abili-
 " ties, I think I have shewn that I hate
 " faction as much as I love liberty, and I
 " wait with impatience the moment when
 " I shall be able to give convincing proofs,
 " that an interested motive never entered
 " my heart; that heart which I have now
 " laid open to you, my dear cousin, with
 " confidence; and eagerly adopts every
 " sentiment in your letter which may
 " more

1789. " more closely connect it with yours, and
" is desirous of knowing whether this
" meets with your approbation. Adieu,
" my dear cousin; present my affectionate
" compliments to your son. I wrote you
" a few lines a short time since, which I
" am apprehensive you never received."

This letter inspired me with no great confidence, and that of M. du Chastelet with still less. I wrote La Fayette the following answer, which, without laying myself too open, was sufficient to encourage him to impart to me his projects, had they been disinterested, and calculated for the public utility.

" Metz, Nov. 20, 1789.

" Many thanks, my dear cousin, for the
" explanations you give me relative to our
" deserters, and the arms and accoutre-
" ments of the regiment of Nassau. I
" wrote to you a short time since upon
" this subject, by an officer who I suppose
" has delivered you my letter, and I refer
" you to it for what may be possible, and
" what may be proper, to do.

" With

“ With respect to the great political
“ affair which you mention in your letter, 1789.
“ I will frankly own that I am as much an
“ enemy to despotism as you can possibly
“ be, though perhaps I am not so extra-
“ vagantly fond of liberty, and, as you say,
“ do not require it in so large a dose as you
“ do: I am firmly of opinion, that what-
“ ever is exaggerated, or exceeds the limits
“ of moderation, can never be of long du-
“ ration, and that, on the contrary, a rea-
“ sonable and moderate liberty may exist
“ for ages. However, my dear cousin,
“ setting every self-interested motive aside,
“ be assured that you, and every honest
“ Frenchman, shall find me ready to second
“ your views when they tend to the wel-
“ fare and happiness of the nation, or the
“ annihilation of arbitrary power, be it of
“ what description it will. You ought to
“ be well acquainted with my principles,
“ and I hope will be still more so hereafter;
“ a perfect knowledge of them will, I
“ doubt not, prove me entitled to your
“ confidence.

1789.

“ Adieu, my dear cousin; may you be
“ happy in contributing to the public hap-
“ piness, which your situation enables you
“ to do.”

My only desire being to serve the king and support the monarchy, which appeared on the eve of dissolution, I avoided declaring myself of any party, at least till I should be assured that they were actuated by the same intentions: but it was necessary to temporize with La Fayette, who was at that time the leading man, and the least of a villain of any. My object then was to keep possession of my army and the strong places under my command; to maintain my position at Metz, and there to wait patiently the course of events, determined to avail myself of the first favourable opportunity which should present itself in the progress of the revolution. This plan I followed exactly, but all my schemes were disconcerted by the imprudence of the king, or rather of his counsellors; though certainly the distrust which subsisted between myself and

La

La Fayette, and the extreme security of that general with respect to the Jacobins, not a little contributed to the failure of my projects. 1789.

I was near three months without hearing from La Fayette: on my part, I was equally silent both with respect to him and M. du Chastelet. During this interval, I received a private letter from M. de la Tour du Pin, minister for the war department, in which he urged me to take the oath to the constitution, which I had hitherto neglected to do, and which had excited a great odium against me amongst the people. M. de la Tour du Pin represented to me, that occupying such a situation as I did, and possessing the confidence of the troops, I might be of great utility to the king. He told me, that I ought to act with extreme caution, as the means I had in my power might one day give me an opportunity of rendering his majesty essential service: adding, that he himself had no other object in view when he accepted his present employ.

He

1789.

He had been made war minister since the revolution, and it was extraordinary that it should have placed so virtuous a man in so important a post.

The views of M. de la Tour du Pin were perfectly conformable to my own; he had the same attachment to his sovereign and the monarchy, and I may venture to say, the same moderation in his sentiments. The confidence he placed in me had produced a similar return on my part, and never had I reason to regret it: during the whole time that he held the office of minister at war, our joint efforts were directed towards the same object with the most perfect unanimity. At his instance I took the oath required, and this procured me some small degree of popularity.

CHAP. VI.

Two parties formed among the revolutionists.

—La Fayette at the head of the constitutionalists.—The duke of Orleans chief of the Jacobins, or anarchists.—Characters of the above leaders.—Their views and projects.

—Their conduct with respect to the army.

—The king goes to the national assembly February 4, 1790.—Effects of this step.

—Excesses committed by the troops at Metz.—They return to their duty.

THERE now existed in France two parties, which were at first united, but afterwards separating, became inveterate enemies. The most violent and daring of the two gained the superiority. Necker had assembled together all the materials proper for a revolution: philosophers, literary characters, and monied men; these were
1789.
seconded

1789. seconded and put in motion by the turbulent, the intriguing, and the ambitious. I am not certain whether Neckar himself projected the plan for overturning the government; but, at least, he suffered it to be completed, without interfering to prevent it. He was himself only a philosophical banker, and had soon neither party nor partisans.

La Fayette in some manner succeeded him. He was first one of the chiefs of the revolution, then of the constitution, of which he was afterwards only the champion. All those who were attached to it, under the name of constitutionalists, formed a party which was supported by a majority of the assembly, and by the king himself, at least in appearance; it was likewise favoured by a great part of the people, by the municipalities, and by the national guards.

The projects entertained by the leaders of this party was to establish a democratical monarchy,

monarchy, which they styled a royal democracy. At the head of this was to be placed the sovereign, as on the summit of a pyramid, whence they could make him descend when the French nation, accustomed to this form of government, should no longer have occasion for the empty name of king, having divested itself of its ancient habits, and of those sentiments of veneration for the throne which it had cherished for so many ages. 1789.

La Fayette was at the head of this party, which then governed in consequence of the advantage that general had obtained over the duke of Orleans since the 5th of October. But La Fayette was incapable of executing what he had undertaken. He was a romantic hero, who, though principal in a conspiracy of the most criminal nature, wished to preserve the appearance of probity, honour, and disinterestedness; in short, he wished to pass for the mirror of chivalry. By a combination of fortunate circumstances, rather than by any talents of

1789.

of his own, he had attained a degree of elevation that might have enabled him to dictate laws, to give a government to France, and to have raised his fortune to the highest pitch an individual can aspire to: but instead of this he ruined himself like a madman, and in his fall implicated the king, the monarchy, and the whole nation.

The other party was composed of that description of men so numerous in France, who, possessing no property, live by their industry, and are always ripe for insurrection. With these were joined the lower order of the people, who are easily excited to commit disorders, and ever ready to obey him who pays them.

The duke of Orleans, wishing to make use of this class of the community in the prosecution of his ambitious and criminal views, had in some manner organized them at Paris under the name of *sans culottes*; and even in the provinces had given them
leaders,

leaders, men of great abilities, and remarkable for their bold and enterprising character, who directed all their movements, the harmony and regularity of which were secured by means of patriotic clubs dispersed over the whole kingdom. 1789.

On the 5th of October the *sans culottes*, in the pay of the duke of Orleans, taking with them the whole populace of Paris, proceeded to Versailles for the purpose of massacring the king and royal family, and placing that prince on the bloody throne.

Having failed in this attempt, the duke of Orleans was compelled to leave France. His party, however, still existed, though with diminished strength, and incorporating with the Jacobins, destroyed the monarchy, overturned the constitution, and in the end made Robespierre, who turned to his own advantage the crimes and projects of the duke of Orleans, the tyrant of France.

1789.

The duke of Orleans was the most atrocious, and at the same time the meanest of villains; he had all the cunning and address necessary to put in motion a great party, without courage to employ it for his own advantage. Defeated in his hopes of ascending the throne by the murder of the king, whose life, though they destroyed his power, was protected by La Fayette and the constitutionalists, he formed the project of exciting a civil war in France, in which, that he might more certainly succeed, he wished to destroy all subordination in the army, and in some degree to disband it; to unite the soldiers with the people, having first persuaded them to renounce all obedience to the established authorities; and to employ both against the king and the assembly, for the purpose of placing himself at the head of the nation. In all the garrisons he had agents, whose object was to seduce the soldiers by inciting them to licentiousness and excess, and holding out to them the prospect of pillage.

La

La Fayette wished likewise to gain over the troops, that he might employ them in support of the constitution, should the king recede from his engagement, or the aristocrats establish a party. For this purpose, he had recourse to the municipal officers of the different cities, the chiefs of the national guards, and the rich citizens, persuading them to use their influence with the soldiers, and endeavour to inspire them with an attachment to the constitution. The national assembly had considerably augmented their pay, and they were flattered with the hopes of a discipline less severe; indeed, the rigour of it was already much relaxed. The severity of their chiefs was blamed, and they were represented to them as haughty despots and enemies to the constitution, which was to produce the general happiness of the people and the ease and convenience of the army.

These were the two rocks between which I was to steer without a compass. The will of my sovereign, like the beams of the sun

1789. during a tempest, was concealed from my view by a dark cloud. The royalists and aristocrats, without support, without a head, without power, had been able to form no party, and had preserved only the privilege of speaking, a faculty dangerous to themselves without being hurtful to others.

La Fayette had retained connections in Metz by means of the deputies for that city, who were strongly attached to the constitution. All the time I was supposed to be connected with him, I had no difficulty in frustrating the efforts of the Orleans' faction, and the Jacobins; I even received assistance from the partisans of the constitution, by tolerating a little their principles and their conduct towards the troops.

It was now almost a year that I had been in this situation, when the king, weary of the painful condition to which he saw himself reduced, and desirous of restoring tranquillity

quillity to the kingdom, went, on the 4th of February, alone to the constituent assembly. Here he pronounced an affecting discourse, in which, to my great surprise, he bound himself by the strongest ties to the constitution; or rather the revolution, of which he declared himself the head. I had remained, and undergone so many troubles and anxieties, solely to preserve for him a small faithful band which might one day assist him, at least, to recover his rank as monarch, and enable him to act and speak like a sovereign; now, however, I saw him without reserve deliver himself into the hands of madmen and villains, who were bent on his destruction: for how could he retract such a step, which he had voluntarily taken, without degrading his character, one of the greatest misfortunes which can befall a king? I formed the resolution to quit France, and seek some other country. It is probable, I mentioned this intention to some person who communicated it to M. de la Fayette, as I soon after received

1789. ceived from him the following letter, which
 shews his self-love, and turn for exaggera-
 tion.

Paris, February 9, 1790.

1790. " Excuse, my dear cousin, my want of
 " punctuality; be assured, it was with
 " pleasure I learned that my conduct had
 " met with your approbation. During
 " the revolution there has existed a dif-
 " ference of principles and sentiments
 " between us: but at present, we ought all
 " to rally round our sovereign, and to esta-
 " blish a constitution which you approve
 " less than I do: defects it certainly may
 " have, but it is sufficient to secure the
 " public liberty, which is already so deeply
 " rooted in the minds and affections of the
 " people, that its enemies cannot attack it
 " without dissolving the monarchy. In
 " this state of things, all honest men form
 " but one party, of which the king has de-
 " clared himself the chief, and which, de-
 " stroying at once antient regrets and
 " factious hopes, may strengthen the bands
 " of

“ of public order, and restoring every 1790.
“ where union and tranquillity, may add
“ new charms to liberty. The king must
“ reflect, with the most delicious satisfac-
“ tion, on the good which he has done,
“ and, particularly, on the evils which he
“ has avoided, and into which an ambi-
“ tious or an unfeeling monarch might
“ have plunged France. Let us then give
“ him the reward of his virtues, by all
“ uniting to restore tranquillity. That of
“ Metz has been disturbed by some discus-
“ sions, with which it was proposed to in-
“ terrupt the proceedings of the national
“ assembly, but I think it better to make
“ no more mention of them. Let me beg
“ of you to settle that affair to the general
“ satisfaction. It is easy for you to sa-
“ tisfy the citizens of Metz, and to com-
“ municate to them a like disposition, as
“ you may give an example of this cordial
“ re-union, without any injury to military
“ discipline, whilst, elsewhere, the one
“ has only been attained at the expence of
“ the other. Besides, I need not represent

1790.

“ to you, that the best method of insuring
“ to the king the authority he holds under
“ the constitution, of which we so much
“ stand in need, is to convince the friends
“ of liberty, that all the agents of the ex-
“ ecutive power agree in principle with
“ their sovereign. I have learned that
“ you have some intention of quitting your
“ country, as if she had no claim to your
“ talents; you do not surely imagine, that
“ a few private injuries you may have suf-
“ tained can give you a right to rob us of
“ the victories we expect from your hands,
“ and in which, I hope, you will permit
“ me to fight under your banner.

“ I flatter myself, my dear cousin, that
“ you are so well acquainted with my cha-
“ racter as to render it useless for me to
“ say, that in the same situation in which
“ the revolution found me, in that shall it
“ leave me; however extraordinary may
“ have been my adventures, to avail myself
“ of them, for the purpose of advancing
“ my own interest, would to me appear
“ still

1790.

“ still more extraordinary, and I with the
“ greater satisfaction make this declaration
“ at a period when it can no longer have
“ the appearance of a bargain. I sincerely
“ wish, my dear cousin, that you would
“ take an early opportunity of shewing
“ your attachment to the constitution; it
“ is impossible that talents like yours should
“ not excite jealousy, and that your former
“ opinions should not furnish either occa-
“ sion or pretext for suspicion; nay, it
“ would, perhaps, be for the good of the
“ nation at large, that you should declare
“ yourself in terms the most unequivocal
“ upon this point. When it is said, M. de
“ Bouillé is a man of the most distinguished
“ abilities, and has the entire confidence of
“ the army, I wish none to have it in their
“ power to say, but he is an enemy to our
“ principles. Pardon my freedom, dear
“ cousin; I only repeat what, within these
“ eight days, has been said to me twenty
“ times, and it gives me pain to hear this
“ reflection passed upon you. Adieu, my
“ dear cousin, be persuaded of my sincere
“ attachment.”

This

1790.

This letter made no alteration either in my principles or projects: but of this I made no mention to La Fayette; I wrote him nearly the same answer as before. I repeated to him the proposal I had formerly made of uniting our efforts to promote the public welfare, and to establish, upon a firm foundation, a monarchical constitution capable of securing to the people their rights and privileges, and to the sovereign his prerogatives. I added, that the step the king had just taken to restore the general tranquillity deserved at least the return of some small attention to his own,

However, our letters produced so little effect, that they might as well both have remained unanswered; having preserved no copies of the major part of mine, I am only able to give the substance of them.

In the mean time my situation at Metz became extremely irksome; I was involved in disputes with the municipality and the patriotic

patriotic club, which were continually incensing the people against me. It has been seen by the letter of La Fayette to what a height these differences rose, complaints being preferred against me to the national assembly. 1790.

The principal crime laid to my charge was, that I opposed the fraternization of the national guards with the troops of the line. This, as I have said, was one of the grand means employed to corrupt the soldiers. I endeavoured, on the contrary, to keep them distinct from each other, and to maintain a constant rivalry between them. Besides I refused to deliver to the people of the towns and country the great quantity of arms which they daily demanded of me. The consequence of the armament was, that the national arsenals were nearly exhausted.

It was proved that since the 14th of July preceding, more than four hundred thousand muskets had been thus distributed,

1790.

buted, and in many places the people seized them by force, when their unreasonable demands met with any opposition.

This general arming then was a motive to insurrection and licentiousness; it furnished the lower order of people with the means of offering violence to the higher orders, whom they styled Aristocrats, an appellation which was the signal for giving them up to persecution.

It has been a matter of some surprise, how names in themselves so little applicable either to the things, to the persons, or to the circumstances of the times, should yet be so generally employed, and even by the lowest of the people. The constituent assembly, the members for the third estate, bestowed the appellation of Aristocrat on all those of the clergy and nobility who refused to join them; the citizens gave it to the nobility in general, who in return called them Democrats; and the poor, pos-
sessed

possessed of neither lands nor property, styled Aristocrats all those who lived in ease and plenty. 1790.

I waited only the return of spring and the arrangement of some affairs to quit France, seeing no resource, and retaining no longer any hopes. Of all the commanders of provinces, I was the only one who had remained at his post; the major part had even already left the kingdom. The principal leaders of the army had abandoned it, and their places were occupied either by general officers who had hitherto been neglected, or by those who had recognized the new form of government.

In the month of March, a spirit of mutiny, almost general, manifested itself in the garrison of Metz, which was composed of twelve battalions and ten squadrons; this was only the effect of intoxication, to which the soldiers had been excited by the inhabitants of the town; at the voice of their

1790.

their officers they returned to their duty, and shewed so much contrition that I conceived a better opinion of them than I had before entertained. Some idea may be formed of the spirit which reigned among the troops, from the following circumstance, which I think it necessary to relate. The day after these orgies, in which the soldiers had insisted upon being accommodated with liquor without paying for it, and had afterwards spread themselves drunk over the whole town, I ordered all the regiments to be confined to their barracks: I then repaired to that part occupied by the regiment of Picardy; I harangued them; I represented to them how disgraceful it was for the first regiment of France to have given such an example to the army; and asked them what they imagined the king would say when it should come to his knowledge? I told them however, that believing their repentance sincere, I would revoke the order I had given, and permit them to enjoy their usual liberty. At this they were in the greatest

greatest astonishment, and cried out almost unanimously, that their conduct had deserved punishment, and that they desired to remain in confinement for eight days. 1790.

These same troops, four months after, were in a state of open insurrection; they renounced all obedience to their officers, they insulted, threatened, and treated them with every indignity. From this we may form some notion of the pains that must have been taken to seduce them, and of the subtilty of the poison employed for this purpose.

CHAP. VII.

The king, at the instance of La Fayette, writes to me with his own hand, desiring me to come to Paris.—I demand permission to quit the kingdom.—He writes me a second letter, to dissuade me from that resolution, and to engage me to remain in his service.—Federation of the national guards of the province des Evéchés with the regular troops.—The former wish to elect me their General, which offer I decline.—Judicious reflections of the war minister, M. la Tour du Pin, upon that subject.

1790. **B**Y what means I do not exactly know, but a coolness had lately taken place between me and the partisans of La Fayette. I knew very well they wished to deprive me of my command, which I was desirous of holding till I left France, which I intended to do in about two
6 months.

months. One reason to which I attributed this change, was a report which had been in circulation, that on the 5th of October the king had formed the project of retiring to Metz to avoid the fury of the people; it was even said, that he still entertained the same design. 1790.

Whether there was any foundation for such a report, I did not know; its greatest degree of credit arose from a letter written by comte d'Estaing to the queen, in which he endeavoured to point out the bad consequences that might result from such a step. This letter, which is one of the usual extravagancies of that man, was much talked of about that time, and has since been published.

From this circumstance, La Fayette took occasion to represent to the king the uneasiness occasioned by my residing at Metz, and persuaded him to write me with his own hand the following letter.

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L

" Sir,

1790.

“ Sir,

Paris, April 23, 1790.

“ I have received a faithful account of
“ your exertions to retain in obedience
“ the important garrison of my town of
“ Metz, and of the success with which
“ your efforts have hitherto been crowned.
“ Your conduct during the late disturb-
“ ances at that place has only increased
“ the favourable sentiments I have ever
“ entertained of you; and it is with the
“ greatest satisfaction I take this opportu-
“ nity of acknowledging the important
“ services you have rendered me. M. de
“ la Tour du Pin will explain to you the
“ reasons which render for a few days
“ your presence at Paris necessary; at the
“ same time I leave it entirely to your
“ own discretion to choose the period
“ when your absence will be attended with
“ the least inconvenience.

“ LOUIS.”

Had I not been already informed, it
would have been easy for me to perceive
that it was not the king's desire I should
come

1790.

come to Paris, where many pretexts might have been invented to prevent my return to Metz. But I then guessed, and have since been assured, that it was La Fayette who engaged his majesty to write me this order, which the king at first refused, and afterwards only consented to invite me. M. de la Tour du Pin, who gave me notice some days before that I should receive a letter from the king, and apprised me of its contents, told me at the same time, that though his majesty desired me to come to Paris, he would not be displeased should I persist in remaining at Metz.

In my answer to the above letter I observed, that having remained in France and continued in the command of the army which he had intrusted to me with no other view than that of serving his majesty, which I now saw to be impossible; I entreated his permission to leave the kingdom instead of repairing to Paris, on my departure from Metz: I at the same time assured his majesty, that

L 2

should

1790.

should ever more favourable circumstances again give me an opportunity of shewing my zeal for his service, and my attachment to his person, I would, obey with the greatest alacrity the first summons I should receive.

This answer was more addressed to La Fayette, to whom I knew he would shew it, than to the king; that prince clearly perceived it, and on the 2d of May he wrote me a second letter, which was transmitted to me by M. de la Tour du Pin.

“ Sir,

Paris, May 2, 1790.

“ In the letter which you sent me, I
 “ observed a passage which gives me much
 “ concern. I can by no means consent to
 “ your quitting either my person or my
 “ kingdom; convinced by the services
 “ you have already rendered me, that I
 “ have still much to expect from your
 “ abilities. Be assured, that I retain a
 “ grateful sense of the obligations I owe
 “ you, and it is out of deference to the gene-
 “ rosity

"rosity and delicacy of your sentiments, 1790.
 "that I do not more fully express the
 "high sense I entertain of your merit. I
 "perfectly approve the dispositions you
 "have made for the fourth of this month,
 "and it is with pleasure I see you par-
 "ticipate in the sentiments with which
 "the new constitution must inspire every
 "good citizen, and particularly my faith-
 "ful servants.

"LOUIS."

This explicit declaration of the king's,
 determined my conduct; I resolved to
 conquer my scruples, and wrote word to
 his majesty, that his will should ever be to
 me a law; that I would, though with ex-
 treme reluctance, conform to this constitu-
 tion, since he himself had acknowledged
 it, and given it his approbation; that in so
 doing I made the greatest sacrifice it was
 possible for a man to make, that of his
 principles and opinions: and I concluded
 with beseeching that his majesty would

1790. grant me leave to retire, whenever I should see that my services could no longer be of any essential utility to him.

The 4th of May, mentioned in the king's letter, was the day appointed for the federation of the national guards of Metz, and the province under my command, with the troops of the line resident in the town of Metz. This, as I have already said, was one of the grand means employed by La Fayette and the constitutional party to attach the soldiers to the constitution.

The ceremony of this federation ought to have taken place some time before, but as there was no express decree to that effect passed in the assembly, and as no orders had been transmitted to me by the king for that purpose, I had hitherto constantly opposed it, on which account new complaints had been preferred against me to the assembly; the town of Metz had even sent two deputies to the king and the assembly, demanding

manding my recall; but M. de la Tour du Pin diverted them from their intentions, and removed their apprehensions by assuring them, that so far from opposing any further obstacle to the union of the people with the troops, it was my intention to do every thing in my power to establish the most perfect harmony between them. That gentleman at the same time signified to me his majesty's wish that I should assist at this federation, renew my oath on the occasion, and try by every method to render myself popular, and gain the confidence of the people and the national guards. This injunction I faithfully obeyed, and such an effect did my conduct produce, that all the national guards of the province offered unanimously to elect me their general, and pressed me earnestly to accept this place. I refused; but I repented, when I found, by a letter which I received a few days after from M. de la Tour du Pin, that it was his majesty's desire that I should accept the proposal; and when I had coolly calculated all the advantages I might have

1790.

1790. derived from it, and the opportunities it would have afforded me of serving his majesty. In confirmation of this opinion, I shall here insert the letter of M. de la Tour du Pin.

“ Paris, May 11, 1790.

“ I see, Sir, by the contents of your
 “ letter of the 6th, that you have in the
 “ fullest manner obtained what was so
 “ justly due to you. I should now con-
 “ gratulate myself on my skill in pro-
 “ phesy, were there any merit in predict-
 “ ing success in affairs committed to your
 “ direction; and indeed, I was from the
 “ beginning less occupied in pointing out-
 “ to you the line of conduct you should
 “ pursue, than in reflecting upon what
 “ might be expected from your abilities.
 “ Immediately on the receipt of your letter,
 “ I hastened to lay it before the king, and
 “ the interest which you must be certain
 “ his majesty takes in whatever concerns
 “ you, can leave you no room to doubt of
 “ the pleasure he experienced on the per-

“ usal

“ uſal of it: to repeat the proofs of his ſa-
“ tisfaction would be uſeleſs, after thoſe he
“ himſelf has been pleaſed to give you.

1790.

“ Having thus, Sir, moſt ſincerely feli-
“ cited you on your ſucceſs, in having
“ gained the public favour, pardon me if
“ my ſentiments do not perfectly coincide
“ with yours, reſpecting the reſuſal you
“ have given to the offer of being appointed
“ general of the federation. This poſt
“ might have given you great influence
“ over the armed forces of the provinces,
“ and perhaps over many others; it would
“ beſides have formed a counterpoiſe
“ which might have been attended with
“ great advantages.

“ As things at preſent ſtand, there is no
“ further talk of your coming to Paris:
“ that project is entirely laid aſide; not that
“ you had any danger to apprehend, I can
“ aſſure you, but your ſituation being totally
“ changed, your preſence becomes indiſ-
“ penſably neceſſary at Metz, and we could
“ dictate

1790.

“ dictate nothing better to you than what
“ you have done, and what you are at pre-
“ sent doing. I have the honor to be,
“ Sir, &c.

“ L. T. DU PIN.”

After the receipt of the last letters written me by the king and his minister, after the engagement I had entered into with his majesty, and the step I had just taken, I saw the necessity of entirely altering my plan of conduct, if I wished to be of any essential service to my sovereign; I now found it would be most proper to connect myself with La Fayette and the constitutionalists, at the same time keeping a watchful eye on the former. Before I made any direct overtures, I endeavoured to discover whether the plan he had in view was grand and comprehensive, and whether he had courage and firmness to execute it. Had he possessed a mind equal to great undertakings, when he brought back the king to Paris, and defeated the party of Orleans, more through a favourable combination of circum-

circumstances than any merit of his own, 1790.
he would have endeavoured to crush and
destroy it entirely. He should have per-
suaded the king to confer on him some im-
portant post, which should have put him at
the head of the kingdom, by giving him
the disposal of the whole public force,
causing himself, likewise, to be appointed
commander of all the national guards of
France; he should then have disbanded the
army, and afterwards have re-assembled
them upon such a plan, and with such of-
ficers, as best suited his purpose; he should
have engaged in his interest the most power-
ful and the most able members of the as-
sembly, the majority of which were already
united to him by principle; he should have
formed partisans among the most distin-
guished men of every class of society;
assisted by able men, he might then have
established, upon the most solid basis, a
monarchical constitution. He would easily
have overcome whatever obstacles he might
have met with in the execution of his plan,

1790.

or rather he would have found none at all. This was the wish of the king and a great majority of the nation; supported by the monarch and the assembly, he was in possession of all the power requisite for so important and useful an undertaking.

But whilst I am reproaching La Fayette with his political conduct, I must regret the errors I myself have committed. Having once consented to conform to the new constitution, and to act under it, which I did with a view of serving my sovereign, I should have endeavoured to take the lead in the new state of affairs, by forming to myself a strong party, which I was able to have done, even among the constitutionalists themselves; I should have supported La Fayette against the Jacobins, and have defended the king against all parties, reserving for him resources in case of an emergency. I ought then, on the 4th of May, to have accepted the command of the confederate national guards of *les Evêchés* and

and Lorraine; I should soon have found myself at the head of those of the other frontier provinces, which were actually not long after submitted to my orders, and served in some manner as a check upon the regular troops under my command. Being thus in possession of a considerable force, I should have gone to Paris to sound the intentions of La Fayette, and endeavour at least to inspire him with confidence. With those of the ministers who were men of talents and integrity, and there were many whom I esteemed such, as M. de la Tour du Pin, I should have concerted a plan of conduct, procured his majesty's sanction to it, and an assurance, on his part, that he would strictly conform to it. This plan should have been adapted, not only to the existing circumstances, but to the character of Louis the Sixteenth, who, with all the beneficence of Henry the Fourth, possessed none of his warlike virtues. The king then should have suffered the constitutional party to proceed in their career, taking care, however, to have some partisans among them;

1790.

them; he was to make judicious reflections upon the different decrees which should be presented to him, without rejecting any, only expressing a constant desire that the new laws should be calculated to promote the happiness of his people; as the defects in the constitution were already perceived by a great majority of the assembly, it would perhaps have fallen of itself, or, which is more probable, would have experienced such alterations as would have left in the king's hands the whole executive power, and the disposal of the national forces. His majesty's conduct no longer inspiring distrust, the fear entertained of the aristocrats would have subsided, and the constitutional party would not have united with the Jacobins. The king might have weakened the party of La Fayette, and I was in possession of a formidable, popular, and military force, which he might have employed usefully, had he properly chose the opportunity. The enlightened part of my readers will, undoubtedly, reproach me with the errors which

which I have mentioned: they are the subjects of my regret; but the horror in which I held this revolution disconcerted the measures which prudence prompted me to follow. I did too much perhaps for my principles, but certainly too little to insure success.

1790.

CHAP. VIII.

I endeavour to sound La Fayette, with a view of co-operating with him if I find his intentions pure and disinterested.—Fail in my attempts.—General federation at Paris of the national guards and the troops of the line.—Effects which this produced in the army.—General insurrection of the troops.—Particulars of that of the garrison of Metz.—I am appointed commander in chief of the army of the west.—My apprehensions of a civil war, and dispositions in consequence.

1790.

IT being no longer intended that I should quit Metz, I wrote to La Fayette, telling him that I had promised his majesty to serve the constitution, which I intended faithfully to do whilst I remained in France; but that hitherto I had daily seen the old government demolished, without perceiving

any other substituted in its place; I doubted not, but he and his friends had been careful to replace what they had destroyed, or else they were criminal in the highest degree; that by the express desire of the king. I had taken an oath of fidelity to a constitution, which was only a chimerical being, I wished, however, to be acquainted with it, as well as with his views; his plans and intentions should have my support if, as I supposed, they were for the benefit of our country. I added, that I had sent my son to Paris, with full instructions; that he might rely upon his discretion, and open himself to him with the same freedom as to myself; I desired him, likewise, to deliver to my son his answer, which was couched in the following terms:

“ Paris, May 20, 1790.

“ I cannot express, my dear cousin, the
“ satisfaction which the receipt of your
“ letter and the arrival of your son afforded
“ me. Be assured, that if my most earnest
“ desire is to see liberty and our constitu-
VOL. I. M tion

1790. " tion effectually established, the second
" wish of my heart is for the return of
" order and tranquillity, and a renovation
" of the public strength and energy. Un-
" happily for us, in the aristocratical party
" there are still men who hope to recover
" their former station, or to revenge them-
" selves by encouraging disorder; and
" among the popular party, there are those
" who imagine that the constitution is to
" be supported by the same means which
" effected the revolution, and perhaps their
" factious views may extend still farther.
" A question which was lately agitated,
" relative to war or peace, in the most
" striking manner divided our party into
" monarchical and republican. We were
" victorious, but this, and many other cir-
" cumstances, have shewn me that all well-
" wishers to their country cannot too
" closely unite themselves together; and
" since your scruples with respect to the
" constitution no longer exist, let us render
" it all the assistance in our power, by re-
" sisting every attempt to disturb the hap-
" piness

1790.

" piness and tranquillity of our fellow-citi-
 " zens, whoever be the authors of it. The
 " person who will deliver you my letter is
 " M. de T. . . , commissioned to negotiate
 " with the German princes, who are pro-
 " prietors in Alsace. He is my most inti-
 " mate friend; you may therefore speak to
 " him with the greatest confidence on all
 " public affairs. I expect your son this
 " morning, and it is with the most lively
 " satisfaction I see the renewal of our
 " friendship. Adieu, my dear cousin; be
 " assured of my sincere attachment, and
 " believe me, &c.

" LA FAYETTE."

In all this there was nothing positive:
 his letter contained no direct answer to my
 questions, and was of as little importance
 as the preceding which he had sent me.
 This M. de T. . . , his intimate friend, and
 to whom he tells me I may speak without
 reserve, was an intriguing man, who had
 acquired a fortune by a variety of means,
 and to whom the revolution furnished new

1790. ones to raise him still higher. I was therefore careful not to enter into any explanation with him.

My son remained five weeks at Paris, during which he frequently saw La Fayette, was treated by him with every mark of kindness, and had several long conversations with him; these were full of an apparent sincerity on the part of La Fayette, but he constantly avoided coming to any explanation with respect to his intentions. Alas! the foolish man had no determined plan of conduct. He told my son, and repeated it frequently, that he had been offered not only the rank of marechal of France, but also that of generalissimo and constable of the kingdom; and this was true; that he had rejected these offers; that his only wish was to establish and confirm the constitution; and that when this great work should be effected, he would return to the rank he occupied before the revolution, and retire to his estate, where he would remain till his endangered country should have need of him.

him. He added, that the attachment which the king shewed to the constitution gave him great satisfaction, but said, he by no means approved of the conduct of the queen. My son having in vain waited six weeks for a decree, which M. de la Fayette and the military committee had promised both him and M. de la Tour du Pin, returned to give me an account of his mission. This decree related to the organization of the army,

1790.

I now received no more letters from La Fayette, who, it is easy to perceive, wished to act the same part in France as Washington had done in America: but he possessed neither the character nor abilities of that great man; the two countries, likewise, would admit of no comparison. However, it was perhaps not yet too late to save France and the monarchy. The three orders of the state, though tottering to their foundation, were still erect amid the ruins which surrounded them: and it would have been easy, by strengthening them, to render

1790.

them useful in the formation of a monarchical government; but the two parties I have mentioned, though divided between themselves, were unanimous in a determination to effect the utter destruction of these bodies. The duke of Orleans was returned from England, and his faction, which had lain quiet during the absence of its chief, now appeared with greater strength than before, and continued to increase in power till it attained a height equal to that of Jacobinism, which destroyed France and threatened all Europe. A proposal was at this time made by La Fayette, that on the 14th of July, the anniversary of the destruction of the Bastille, a solemn league should be entered into between the national guards and the troops of the line. This confederation was to take place at Paris, It was to be formed on the part of the national guards by detachments from each department; the troops of the line were to send detachments from every regiment. The deputations which came from the provinces, to assist at this ceremony, shewed
the

the king every mark of respect and attachment, and many people have thought that he might have availed himself of these favourable sentiments, to effect a revolution in his favour at Paris. This, however, was not his character, nor in his heart did he entertain such an idea; I even doubt whether, had he attempted it, he would have succeeded.

1790.

The confederation, in the mean time, poisoned the minds of the troops. On their return from the capital, they brought with them the seeds of corruption; these they instilled into their comrades, and in a fortnight, or, at most, a month, the whole army was in a state of the most terrible insurrection. That the Orleanists and Jacobins first instigated the troops to this violence, I am very well convinced, having myself obtained proofs of their treachery.

At the time this confederation took place, all being quiet at Metz, I demanded leave of absence for two months, intend-

1790.

ing to go to Aix-la-chapelle for the purpose of drinking the waters, which my health rendered absolutely necessary. This request was granted, but whilst preparing for my departure, I received a decree of the assembly, ordering all the officers and generals of the army to give a writing under their hand, engaging upon their honour, faithfully to conform to the constitution, and to execute no orders which should appear contrary to its principles. This decree I censured severely, as pregnant with many bad effects

It excited suspicions of their officers in the minds of the soldiers, at a time when it was necessary that the greatest harmony should subsist between them; it greatly diminished the respect due from a soldier to his officers, which ought on the contrary rather to be increased; it was calculated likewise to add to that discontent, which the latter must naturally experience from the recent abolition of all titles of nobility; and lastly, it was entirely useless and

and superfluous, since they had already
several times taken the oath of fidelity to
the constitution. 1790.

These oaths were afterwards so frequently repeated, that they were treated by every body with derision; and here I must express my admiration of the clergy, who firmly refused to take that which was afterwards required of them. This must have proceeded entirely from a motive of conscience, as they had previously, without any resistance, suffered themselves to be stripped of all their possessions. A memorable instance of virtue this, which cost many of them their lives, and brought their whole order under a general proscription.

I imagined this decree to be one of those little artifices which La Fayette had before frequently employed to divide the soldiers from their officers, and disgust the latter, who were permitted to quit the service, if they were unwilling to enter into
the

1790. the proposed engagement. I mentioned my discontent to some of the friends of La Fayette, and in consequence, a few days after, received from him the following letter.

" Monday *.

" I am informed, my dear cousin, that
 " some persons have endeavoured to de-
 " prive me of your good opinion: but
 " with a heart upright like yours, inte-
 " grity cannot long be mistaken, and
 " friendship is equally sure of making
 " itself heard.

" You have been told many absurdities
 " with regard to my views, my measures,
 " and my wishes; it is natural for ambi-
 " tious men to endeavour to find some
 " private motives for the conduct of a
 " man, who, though in possession of ex-
 " tensive power, seeks only the advance-
 " ment of the public good. Personal
 " enmity they have likewise endeavoured

* It had no other date.

" to

“ to sow between us; this too is natural, 1790,
“ for there are many who envy me, and
“ others to whom I have given cause of
“ dissatisfaction; so that in gaining the ap-
“ probation of my country, I have drawn
“ on myself the hatred of all parties.

“ Much censure has been passed upon
“ my actions, sometimes with reason and
“ sometimes without. The accusations
“ preferred against me are contradictory,
“ and would furnish me with the means
“ of defending myself; but whilst I se-
“ verely blame my faults, I take credit for
“ my intentions, and though others might
“ have acted better, no one has followed
“ more closely the dictates of conscience.

“ Let me beg of you, my dear cousin,
“ whenever you think you have reason to
“ be dissatisfied with my conduct, to ad-
“ dress yourself immediately to me: our
“ dispositions are not alike, and our politi-
“ cal principles differ; but we are both
“ upright men, and as such, are not al-
“ ways

1790.

“ ways to be met with, we shall better
“ clear up by ourselves any thing that
“ may want explaining, than by suffering
“ others to interfere.

“ I will frankly confess that this new
“ engagement required of the officers is a
“ very exceptionable measure. It was
“ found necessary first, to check that spirit
“ of licentiousness which pervaded the
“ whole kingdom, next to reconcile the
“ people to the encampment of the troops,
“ and then to render the engagement enter-
“ ed into by the officers of the army, com-
“ mon to all public functionaries: when
“ this was effected, there still remained
“ this last form of giving a promise, which
“ can have nothing in it particularly dis-
“ agreeable to the army, since it extends
“ to all conditions, but it is derogatory to
“ the dignity of the French nation, already
“ weary of the repetition of these oaths,
“ of fidelity.

“ As the assembly however, far from
“ intending to offend the officers of the
“ army,

“ army, had no other object in view than
“ to furnish them with the means of ef- 1790.
“ fectually silencing the voice of slander,
“ and destroying all pretext for mutiny or
“ disobedience; we rely on your patriot-
“ ism, my dear cousin, to reject any bad
“ construction that may be put upon their
“ conduct, and hope that your example
“ will be the means of uniting the officers
“ in that disposition towards the constitu-
“ tion, which is ardently desired by all
“ good citizens, whilst the factious and
“ discontented of all parties desire no-
“ thing more than to inspire them with
“ sentiments of disaffection.

“ My friend Emeri writes to you; he
“ wished me to request a favour of you in
“ his behalf, but I am afraid it is now my
“ turn to employ an intercessor; however,
“ I should fear nothing, were you but
“ thoroughly sensible of the sincerity of
“ my attachment to you.

“ LA FAYETTE.”

La Fay-

1790.

La Fayette was at this time vigorously attacked by the party of the duke of Orleans; he was fast losing his popularity at Paris, and in the provinces, and his influence over the assembly was already much diminished. He derived his importance rather from the circumstance of having the person of the king in his possession, than from any force of which he himself was master; indeed it had been in agitation to disband the army, and assemble a new one modelled upon the principles of the revolution. This measure was advised by Mirabeau, and was in itself perfectly reasonable, for the army of the kings of France commanded by the nobles, could not possibly be the army of the new constitution which had destroyed nobility. To gain over the troops in favour of the new establishment, it was necessary to corrupt them, to alienate their affections from their officers, diffuse through them a spirit of disobedience, and perhaps even prompt them to mutiny and licentiousness. This was the wish of the duke of Orleans and

the Jacobins; but the dangers attendant on such a step were so evident, that they were perceived the moment it was mentioned. I now wrote to La Fayette, repeating my disapprobation of the false step recently taken, telling him, however, that I would set the example to the army by conforming to it myself. 1790.

Just as I was on the point of setting out for Aix-la-chapelle, the insurrection which broke out almost at the same time in all the garrisons of the kingdom, appeared likewise in those under my command, particularly in that of Metz, where it was attended with circumstances of the most alarming nature, threatening nothing less, than the total dissolution of the army, and the plunder of the cities and provinces, nay, even the whole kingdom, the soldiers having united themselves with the populace. That these consequences were to be feared, the example of Nancy, the terror of the king, the assembly, and La Fayette, are a sufficient proof; the letters I received from

1790. from his majesty, from the president, and from the last mentioned person, after I had suppressed the revolt, are filled with apprehensions of this nature. Every where the soldiers formed committees, each regiment having its own, by which its conduct was directed. From these they chose a small number of deputies, who were appointed to wait on their officers, for the purpose of humbly demanding the stoppages which had been made from their pay, under the late form of government, by inspectors*. As this request was perfectly reasonable, and made with respect, it was granted. In some corps, these stoppages amounted to a considerable sum: in others, to little or nothing. Not contented with this first success, the soldiers formed new and unreasonable pretensions, which being rejected,

* So far back as the month of May 1789, I had proposed to the minister to augment the pay of the army, in order to attach it to the king. This he refused, and a measure so popular was left to the assembly, who, shortly after, not only considerably increased the pay of the soldiers, but likewise secured to the subaltern officers the promotion they so much desired.

they

they flew to arms, confined their officers to their apartments, carried the colours to their barracks, placed a guard over the treasurers of the regiments, opened the military chests and distributed the money among themselves; if they were not satisfied with what they found there, they levied contributions upon their officers, who, for the most part, were obliged to borrow of the tradesmen and inhabitants of the towns to satisfy their exorbitant demands. Yet, notwithstanding this, they regularly performed the military service as usual, obeying their officers only in this one respect. They seemed animated by the same mind, and to have but one will, and one leader.

“Vigilias, stationes et si qua alia presens
 “usus indixerat, ipsi partiebantur. Id
 “militares animos altius conjectantibus
 “præcipuum indicium magni atque im-
 “placabilis motus quod neque disjecti vel
 “paucorum instinctu sed pariter ardesce-
 “rent, pariter filerent; tanta æqualitate
 “et constantia ut regi crederes.” *Tacit.*

Annal.

VOL. I.

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1790.

1790.

This is an exact picture of what passed in the army, and in almost all the garrisons of the kingdom. In some of them, particularly that of Nanci, much greater excesses were committed. The soldiers dispersed themselves over the town, and mixing with the populace, indulged themselves in every species of licentiousness.

Immediately on perceiving the first symptoms of this insurrection, I determined not to avail myself of the leave of absence which I had obtained, but to use my best endeavours to stop the evil before it proceeded any farther. I repaired to the first regiment which had taken arms for the purpose of seizing the military chest and the colours; I proceeded to harangue the soldiers, who had ranged themselves in order of battle with loaded arms, and had ordered their officers to take their usual station in the ranks; but I could obtain nothing of them; to all my remonstrances they constantly and unanimously answered that they would have money, demanding a

5

very

very considerable sum. The officers joined with me in haranguing them, but in vain. 1790. It was a German regiment which I expected would be more reasonable than the others, but I was much mistaken; their measures were marked with more order and method, but they were equally obstinate. The soldiers having cried out to each other, that it was necessary to get possession of the military chest and colours, which were at the house of the commander of the regiment, at a small distance, I called the officers to me, and we ran thither, placing ourselves before the door sword in hand; the grenadiers came and ranged themselves before us in good order, whilst the rest of the regiment remained in the line which they had formed, before the barracks, having taken the precaution of sending detachments to guard the entrance of the principal streets, for the purpose of depriving me of all communication with the rest of the town: I had, however, found means to send orders to a regiment of dragoons, whose barracks lay very near, ordering

1790.

them to mount on horseback and charge the German regiment. This order the officers obeyed, but the dragoons refused to a man. In the same manner, the commanders of the different corps which composed the garrison were unable to prevail on them to act in the suppression of this revolt; the soldiers refusing to take arms, openly declaring, that they had promised not to employ them against this regiment, whose demands they said were just, and whose conduct they approved. Thus deprived of all assistance, I remained in this position two hours, the grenadiers either not daring or not wishing to force the door, and preserving the most profound silence. Some of them, instigated by the lower order of people, who called out to them to have either money or blood, levelled at me several times, but their arms were constantly raised by the subaltern officers; at last, the municipality, being informed of my situation, came in a body to my relief. The mayor, a very worthy man, remonstrated with the soldiers, who quietly returned to their

their barracks. However, the following day, they compelled their officers to distribute to them half the sum they had demanded the preceding evening. 1790.

In the beginning of the month of August, these scenes were successively repeated by every regiment of the garrison, and all my efforts to prevent them were in vain. The magistrates and inhabitants of Metz, alarmed at the consequences which might result from the unrestrained licentiousness of ten thousand men, who no longer acknowledged either chiefs, laws, discipline, or authority, united themselves to me, and seconded my endeavours to suppress this disorder; even the national guards, who, since the federation which took place on the 4th of May, had remained firmly attached to me, offered to act against these troops, and with their assistance we succeeded in re-establishing some degree of order in the garrison. The officers and commanders regained part of their former authority, but they lost their importance in

1790. the eyes of the soldiers, and that they never recovered.

A few days after these events had taken place, I received the following letter from La Fayette:

Paris, Aug. 18, 1790.

" You are undoubtedly acquainted, my
" dear cousin, with the decree which has
" unanimously passed the assembly, relative
" to the insurrection at Nanci; M. de la
" Tour du Pin is preparing to transmit to
" you the king's orders, and Des Mottes,
" my aid-de-camp, who is charged with
" them, will give you any information
" you may wish for, so that I shall not
" long intrude upon your patience. The
" moment is now arrived, my dear cousin,
" when the anarchy attendant on the re-
" volution must begin to give place to the
" order established by the constitution.
" The departments are entering on their
" functions, and the courts of justice,
" though still incomplete, will shortly be
" organized.

“ organized. The subject of the national
“ guards will soon come before the assem- 1790.
“ bly, which, at the moment I am writing,
“ is determining the plan and amount of
“ the regular military establishment; al-
“ ready has the king been able to choofe
“ his first general, who is to command the
“ most considerable of the four armies.
“ Let us not be discouraged then, my dear
“ cousin; but hope, that by uniting in
“ support of the constitution, and by la-
“ bouring to surmount whatever difficulties
“ we may happen to meet with, we shall
“ at last succeed in establishing liberty and
“ public order.

“ The decree relative to Nanci is very
“ proper, and ought to be fully and rigor-
“ ously executed; as soon as it was passed
“ the king gave it his sanction. M. de la
“ Tour du Pin then announced to all the
“ members of the assembly, that M. de
“ Malfeigne would execute it. After
“ having declared this choice, which met

1790.

“ with universal approbation, he discovered
“ that M. de Malfeigne was at Besançon.
“ I this evening received a note from his
“ majesty, desiring me to concert measures
“ with you; to wait on M. de la Tour du
“ Pin, and to write to the national guards.

“ It appears to me that, except sending
“ the decree, no other step has been taken.
“ A courier has been dispatched to M. de
“ Malfeigne, with orders for him to wait
“ your instructions at Lunéville. I have
“ written, not officially, but paternally, to
“ the national guards of the four depart-
“ ments, and sent my letter to Epinal by
“ one of my aides-de-camp, who will re-
“ pair likewise to Lunéville to receive your
“ orders, and give you an account at Metz
“ of his mission. We have retained the
“ deputation of soldiers from the king's
“ regiment, and propose writing to you
“ to-morrow evening by Gouvernet, who
“ is coming to join you.

“ It

“ It is my opinion, my dear cousin, that 1790.
“ some blow should be struck*, which
“ may terrify the whole army, thus check-
“ ing, by one signal example, that spirit
“ of revolt which so universally prevails:
“ should M. de Malseigne not find the
“ task too difficult, the measures they are
“ taking are fully sufficient; but in case of
“ any great resistance on the part of the
“ insurgents, and particularly should they
“ be assisted by other garrisons, every effort
“ must be used to save our country, and I
“ beg your permission to march thither
“ with the title of your aid-de-camp. It
“ is of the greatest consequence that we
“ should not fail in our attempt; and our
“ dispositions should be made with such
“ judgment, that nothing should be left to
“ chance.

“ Adieu, my dear cousin; it is with
“ singular satisfaction I co-operate with

* On this occasion we see the constitutionalists acting in concert with the king, and consequently with all moderate royalists.

“ you,

1790. " you, being assured of your attachment
" to our constitution, and being equally
" desirous with you of the return of public
" order. Whatever commissions you may
" have at Paris, address them to me. I
" imagine that circumstances may occur,
" in which two officers of the national
" guard of Paris may be of service.
" Once more adieu.

" LA FAYETTE."

The soldiers in the garrison of Nanci, in conjunction with the populace, were indeed in a most terrible state of insurrection: they had sent deputies to the different garrisons, inviting the soldiers either to join them or to follow their example, and engaging them not to obey, if ordered to march against them: they had likewise sent deputies to Paris, with orders to present an address of a very insolent nature to the assembly, and they were openly supported by the Jacobin club at Paris: La Fayette however had caused them to be arrested, and the assembly had passed a
decree

decree ordering the soldiers to return to their duty, and the inhabitants of Nanci to their obedience to the laws, under pain of being treated as rebels. A general officer, M. de Malfeigne, was charged with the execution of this decree, and I was ordered to render him every assistance in my power, employing even arms if they persisted in their rebellion. 1790.

The day after I had received the decree of the assembly, an order was sent me by the king, to take under my command the troops of Lorraine, Alsace, Franche-Comté, and all Champagne. These united to the garrison of Metz, formed an army, of which I was appointed general, consisting of a hundred and ten battalions, and a hundred and four squadrons; it covered the whole frontier from Switzerland to the Sambre: the rest of the French army was divided into three parts: M. de Rochambeau commanded that of the North, which comprised all French Flanders, Picardy, and Normandy: that of the South was commanded

1790. manded by Marechal de Mailly; the other,
which included all the western coast except Normandy, Picardy, and Flanders, was to be commanded by a fourth general who was not yet named.

If ever I was averse to extending my command, it was in the present instance; almost all the troops had for some time indulged themselves in disorder and licentiousness, and, in short, the whole of the French infantry was in a state of insurrection: there remained only the foreign infantry upon which any reliance could be placed, and even of these some regiments were already corrupted. However, a great part of the cavalry still retained their obedience to their officers, and their fidelity to the king; whether it was that they were composed of a better description of men than the infantry, being generally chosen from among the peasantry and rustics, and were less inclined to licentiousness; or that being distributed in the little villages and towns, they were less exposed

to seduction. Of the hundred and ten battalions then under my command, there were no more than twenty which I was certain would obey my orders, and these were either German or Swiss; but of the hundred and four squadrons, there were at least sixty which preserved their fidelity to their sovereign, and of these, seven-and-twenty were Hussars or Germans. I demanded of M. de la Tour du Pin, who, I have already said, had the same principles and views as myself, an order empowering me to march the troops wherever I thought proper. This was of the greatest importance in the present circumstances, and I might find it of great utility on some future occasion. It was granted me by the following letter, which was accompanied by an order to the administrative bodies:

“ Paris, Aug. 24, 1790.

“ I hastened, Sir, to lay before the king
“ your letter of the 15th. His majesty
“ is perfectly sensible of this new sacrifice
“ you make him in relinquishing your
“ design.

1790.

“ design. From your zeal for his service,
“ and your attachment to his person, he
“ persuades himself that you will continue
“ in the station to which he has been
“ pleased to appoint you, till it shall appear
“ that there is no longer any possibility of
“ maintaining you in it. I need not say
“ that you may rely on me to second, by
“ every method in my power, your efforts.

“ Had it not been for reasons of the
“ greatest moment, the confidence I have
“ in you would have led me to send you,
“ instead of orders, the blank which you
“ ask; my motives for not doing so I have
“ communicated to my son, and I hope
“ you will approve of them. With a view
“ of facilitating as far as possible your
“ projects, I have written to the different
“ departments, and have enclosed you a
“ copy of the letter. By this time the
“ troops are apprised by the commandants
“ of Alsace, Lorraine, and even Hainault,
“ that they are now at your disposal; so
“ that I hope you will find no obstacle to
“ the

“ the march of that part of them which
“ you may judge it expedient to put in
“ motion; at least, none which I have been
“ able to remove. 1790.

“ But at the same time, Sir, that I con-
“ ceive the urgent necessity of breaking the
“ spirit of insurrection, by frequent move-
“ ments, other considerations, of equal
“ importance, oblige me to recommend to
“ you the greatest circumspection in the
“ employment of this means. Be assured,
“ as far as possible, that your orders
“ will be obeyed, before you venture to
“ issue them; the worst of consequences
“ might result from seeing them disputed:
“ a safe and advisable method appears to
“ me, to establish a reciprocal confidence
“ between you and the constitutional au-
“ thorities of the different departments in
“ which are the troops under your com-
“ mand, and to act in concert with them;
“ this is, indeed, the only method left us,
“ and should it fail, I see no other resource.

“ His

1790.

“ His majesty, Sir, approves your conduct in sending M. de Malseigne alone to Nanci; it is his wish, that force should not be employed till matters come to such an extremity as to oblige the departments to have recourse to it.”

“ The information which my son will give you renders it useless for me to speak more particularly to the rest of your demands. I have the honour to be, Sir, &c.”

“ DE LA TOUR DU PIN.”

As soon as I found myself at the head of this army, and saw the alarming state of the troops, and the dangerous condition of the kingdom, I had no difficulty in perceiving that, before long, things would come to a crisis, which would probably be the forerunner of a civil war. My first thoughts were to secure a situation which might enable me to employ the resources of which I was master, in resisting whatever might happen, and even in directing events.

Having

Having at my disposal a numerous cavalry, and a small body of infantry, my plan was to collect those troops upon which I could rely, and to place them in a situation which offered the means of resistance, could supply their wants, and from whence they might act with freedom and effect upon the neighbouring provinces. The position I chose then was the banks of the Seille, which falls into the Moselle. In this place are extensive meadows proper for the support of a large number of cavalry, particularly at that time, when they were gathering in the hay. My situation was defended by three little places, called Marfal, Vic, and Moyenvic, all without inhabitants, and requiring small garrisons. The first was surrounded by a marsh, and was in itself very strong. I had before me plains upon which my cavalry might act with advantage, and I was placed between Alsace, Lorraine, and the Bishoprics, having an entrance into Franche-Comté and Burgundy; I likewise secured Bisch and Phalsbourg, two excellent little fortresses, which

1790. one battalion was sufficient to defend. These places rendered me master of part of the mountains of Vôlges, which separate lower Alface from Lorraine and the Bishoprics; it was my intention, likewise, to take possession of Montmédi, a fortress of the same kind, which would have given me a communication with Luxembourg, and with foreigners.

The second day after I had received orders to take upon me the command of this army, I gave directions for assembling all the forage on the Seille and the upper Moselle; the provisions I laid up at Marfal; I then commanded a train of artillery to be brought here, and in this place disposed my best regiments.

CHAP. IX.

Affair of Nanci.—Particulars of that event, and its consequences.—I make the tour of the provinces of which I am commandant.—Disposition of the people and troops at that time.—My project for restoring the king to liberty, and placing him at the head of his army.—Change in the ministry, and bad effects of that measure.

IN the mean time the insurrection at Nanci continued to increase, becoming daily of a nature more alarming. The garrison was composed of four battalions of the king's regiment, accounted one of the best in France; of two battalions of Swiss, principally from Geneva, the Pays de Vaud and Neuchatel; and of the regiment of Mestre de Camp, which was cavalry: assisted by five or six thousand men, either of

1790.

1792.

the town or neighbourhood, who had joined them in hopes of pillaging, they had opened the arsenals, from whence they had taken five thousand muskets; they had seized upon the powder magazines, and loaded eighteen pieces of cannon *. The soldiers had plundered the military chest, and had indulged themselves in every species of licentiousness and disorder; they had assaulted and ill-treated their officers, committing many of them to prison, and among others, the general officer who commanded them; in conjunction with the populace, they had exacted money of the constituted authorities of the place, threatening to hang the municipal officers and commissioners for the department, in case they refused to comply with their demands. They had avowed the most sovereign contempt for the national assembly, and had burnt its decrees; in short, they had expressed their intention to plunder and sack

* The town, it is true, was not fortified; it had a citadel, but the fortifications of it had been long suffered to fall to ruins.

the city, and had marked out the principal victims. Such was the situation in which M. de Malfeigne found Nanci. 1790.

On his arrival there he caused the decree of the assembly to be proclaimed, but the people and soldiers treated it with derision; on his haranguing the latter, for the purpose of inducing them, by gentle means, to return to their duty, they threatened him, and even attempted to seize him: but having, by his courage and presence of mind, escaped out of their hands, he retired to Lunéville, where was a body of carabineers consisting of eight squadrons. These had hitherto quietly conformed to military discipline. The garrison of Nanci, and with them a party of the national guards, at that time, seeing that general Malfeigne had escaped from them, obliged their officers to place themselves at their head, and proceeded in martial order to Lunéville, for the purpose of compelling the carabineers, who had refused a demand to

1790.

that effect, to deliver up to them that general.

As soon as I, was informed of these events, I determined to assemble some troops and march against Nanci; but I could neither employ those of the garrison of Metz, nor those of the neighbouring towns: the infantry were detestable; and I was, besides, well assured, that the soldiers had promised not to act against the king's regiment, if they should be ordered. I had no foreign infantry near me, and I was afraid of employing the national guards, as I could not place much dependence on them; the plan I adopted then was to dispatch orders for some Swiss and German battalions, together with some regiments of cavalry, to put themselves in motion, and I happily succeeded in getting out of Metz a small train of artillery, of eight pieces of cannon. I then quitted that town myself, but secretly, for I was under some apprehensions that the soldiers of the garrison would

would prevent me. I arrived at Toul the same day, and found there a battalion of Swiss and a regiment of cavalry. I was informed at this place that the carabineers, after having refused to deliver up M. de Malseigne, after even a slight engagement with the garrison of Nanci, which they had obliged to retire in disorder to that town, had themselves proceeded to mutiny the following day, arrested their general, sent him under an escort to Nanci, and delivered him into the hands of the soldiers of the garrison, who had thrown him into prison. At the same time, I was informed by the general officer who commanded at Metz during my absence, that the troops and national guards were much dissatisfied that I would not employ them in this expedition; both had sent a deputation to him, requesting him to make a tender of their services to me, and exert his interest in persuading me to accept them.

To make use of these troops on an occasion so critical and so dangerous, was a

1790. measure of great hazard. I was afraid left the soldiers should join the rebels, and I was apprehensive the national guards would not display that courage and energy so necessary in an affair of this kind.

To compromise matters then, and take away all cause of umbrage from the troops and national guards of Metz, I resolved to accept six hundred grenadiers and as many national guards, which on the 30th, at Fronard, about a league and a half from Nanci, I united to four battalions of Swiss or Germans, and fourteen squadrons of cavalry; but to act against the town, the latter were of very little use to me.

On the 30th and 31st, the troops were assembled there, consisting of three thousand infantry and fourteen hundred cavalry. Two thousand national guards of the neighbouring departments, which had a few days before been collected by the aid-de-camp of La Fayette, had yielded to the persuasion of the people and garrison of Nanci,

Nanci, and had joined them; so that in 1790.
town there were now ten thousand men in arms: I was not even sure that the ten squadrons of carabineers had not gone over to them. With means so weak then, I laid aside all thoughts of attacking Nanci, but I resolved to try once more what could be done by persuasion; I wished to intimidate them, and reduce them rather by the appearance of force, than by force itself; if I should not succeed, it was my determination to return immediately to Marsal with my troops, to assemble a much greater number, and there wait for orders, or rather conduct myself as circumstances should direct.

The 30th, in the morning, I found means to introduce into the town a proclamation, in which I again commanded the people and soldiers to conform to the decrees of the assembly, to return to their duty, and to deliver up the most factious of their chiefs. I gave them four-and-twenty hours to return an answer.

At

1790.

At Fronard I learned, that the rebels had compelled the commanding officer at Nanci; whom they had confined in prison, to sign an order, enjoining the troops which I had commanded to march against that town to retire, and two regiments of cavalry had actually suspended their march.

At half past eleven o'clock, I received a deputation from the town of Nanci, in answer to my proclamation; it was composed of members chosen by the people, or rather the lowest class of the people, and of soldiers from the different regiments; among the latter were some of the carabineers. This deputation was accompanied by the principal members of the department and the municipality, whom they had compelled to follow them, threatening to massacre them if they refused. I gave them audience in a very large court-yard belonging to the house which I occupied, and having ordered some of my soldiers to be present, the place was soon filled with them, consisting principally of the grenadiers

1790.
diers of the garrison of Metz and the national guards of that town, whose fury and indignation was such, that I with difficulty prevented them from offering some violence to the deputies. To these I repeated what I had mentioned in my proclamation; I told the soldiers, that I required the three regiments to leave the town, and submit to the decree of the assembly, by delivering up the ringleaders of the insurrection: to the members chosen by the people I said, that I first insisted on their delivering into my hands the two general officers whom they held in confinement; that they should then permit my troops to enter the town, should put into their hands the cannon they were in possession of, and should submit to the orders of the constituted authorities: I assured them all, at the same time, that if they did not obey, I would execute the law with the greatest rigour, by employing the force which I had at my disposal.

When I had concluded, the municipal officers observed the most profound silence, and

1790. and appeared terrified: but the deputies, with the most insolent tone of voice, expressed their contempt of my orders, and proposed conditions themselves, which again so excited the indignation of my soldiers, but particularly the French grenadiers, that (forgetting, without doubt, what their own conduct had been about a fortnight before) they cried out, "Hang them, they are rebels and rascals;" and it was with the greatest difficulty I prevented them from laying hold of the men, and putting them to death on the spot; it was only on condition that I should directly lead them against the town and attack it, if the people and garrison did not quietly submit.

On my dismissing the deputation, having acquainted them with my determination, and that of the soldiers, some members of the administrative bodies drew near me, and informed me in a whisper, that the rebels were so enraged against them, that their destruction was inevitable if I suffered them to return to Nanci; they at the same
time

time assured me, that the insurgents had obliged the municipality to send a message to the carabineers, requiring them to join in the revolt, but that the latter had desired a positive order from the administrative body of the department, which had been refused. I then ordered the members of the municipality, and of the above assembly who had accompanied the deputation, to remain with me: the deputies returned to Nanci; and immediately after, at half past twelve o'clock, I began my march towards that town, determining to attack the rebels if they persisted in their obstinacy.

However dangerous the step I was about to take, to avoid it was now impossible; on engaging an enemy so much superior in number, I had reason to expect the most disastrous consequences to myself and little army; yet, had I refused to comply with the desire of my troops, and attempted to oppose that species of fury with which they were inspired, it is probable that I

1790. myself should become its victim; they would then have considered me as a traitor; a light in which, a short time before, they had regarded all their generals, and me in particular. Such being my situation then, I blindly committed myself to fortune for my success.

At half past two I was at the distance of half a league from the town of Nanci; here I met another deputation, attended by their officers, whom the soldiers had compelled to accompany them; to the proposals made by this deputation, I gave the same answer as to the former: I repeated to them, that, as a preliminary step, I insisted on the liberation of the two general officers; that I then required the three regiments to leave the town, and await, in a place which I pointed out, the execution of the decree, and the orders consequent on it; I told them, that they must deliver up to me four men from each regiment, whom I would send, under an escort, to be tried by the national assembly; and lastly, I enjoined
the

1790.

the people to return to their duty, and submit to the laws. The officers, as well as deputies, demanded an hour to consider of my proposals, which I granted; this expiring about four o'clock, I ordered my advanced guard to approach the gates of the town, which were defended by troops and armed inhabitants with several pieces of cannon. I was now met by a third deputation, accompanied by several members of the administrative bodies, and some of the principal officers of the garrison. Having again desired the troops to halt, though within about thirty paces of one of the gates, I went to speak to the deputies who had quitted the town by another. These assured me, that my orders would be directly obeyed; that the regiments were leaving the town, for the purpose of repairing to the place I had appointed; that the two general officers would be immediately delivered up to me; accordingly, a few minutes after, I saw the head of the column into which the king's regiment was formed file off from the town, and was

1790. soon joined by generals Malseigne and De Noue. I had suspended the march of my troops, concluding all finished after the assurance I had received from the deputies, both of the town and of the soldiers; I had even sent some of the national guards of Metz into the town, where they were received in a very friendly manner, and I only waited the departure of the garrison to enter myself and take possession of it. I thought myself then in the most perfect security, and applauded myself for having happily escaped from a situation so extraordinary and so dangerous.

I was conversing with the two general officers, and some of the principal inhabitants of the town who had accompanied them, at a short distance from the gate near which was the head of one of my columns, when the people and armed populace, and a great number of soldiers who had not followed their colours, began a quarrel with my advanced guard, composed of Swiss, and were preparing to fire on them with

with several pieces of heavy ordnance loaded with grape-shot, which they had placed in the entrance of the gate. A young officer of the king's regiment, named Desfilles, however, prevented them for some time; he placed himself before the mouth of a cannon, and when torn from thence, he leaped upon a four-and-twenty pounder, and seating himself upon the touch-hole, was in that position massacred; the match was now applied to the cannon, and in an instant, fifty or sixty men of my vanguard lay dead; the rest, followed by the French grenadiers, advanced with fury to seize the cannon, took possession of the gate called Stainville, and entering the town, were in an instant assaulted with a shower of musket-balls, proceeding from cellars, windows, and the roofs of the houses, without any enemy appearing.

What was my astonishment, when I heard the signal of a battle which I had endeavoured to avoid, and which I had no longer any reason to expect! I flew

1790. to place myself at the head of my troops, which were mowed down in heaps, thrown into disorder, and on the point of flying. Rallying them, however, I hastily made my dispositions to penetrate in two columns, which advanced very slowly and with great difficulty along the principal streets. In the mean time, the troops of the garrison thinking themselves betrayed, and that advantage had been taken of their absence to attack the people and their comrades, re-entered Nanci with precipitation to assist them; happily, the officers of the king's regiment, who had been compelled by the soldiers to remain with them, succeeded in persuading their men to retire into the court-yard of their barracks, form themselves in order of battle, and wait there till attacked. This prudent measure saved all; there were now only about 600 men of this regiment, in conjunction with the rest of the garrison and the people, who engaged our troops. These latter too, thinking that the troops who were in Nanci had suffered them to advance in security, for the

the purpose of drawing them into an ambush and fighting them with advantage, were filled with fury and indignation.

1790.

Such was the posture of both parties when this singular engagement began, about half past four in the afternoon. It was half past seven before I reached the principal squares, into which opened the barracks of the king's regiment and the Swiss guards, which were situated at two extremities of the town. I had already lost forty officers, and nearly four hundred soldiers, either killed or wounded. One of the German battalions, as well as the national guards of Metz, having lost a great number of men, had retired. My cavalry was not of any use to me. At the beginning of the affair, I had imprudently ordered two squadrons of Hussars into the town, half of which had been cut to pieces; I was even obliged to dispatch a great part of my cavalry on the road to Lunéville, to oppose the carabineers, by whom I expected every moment to see myself attacked.

1790.

It is true, the rebels had likewise suffered considerably. We had killed a great many of them, taken twelve pieces of cannon, and made upwards of five hundred prisoners, including the soldiers of the garrison, and the people who assisted them. The revolted regiments had retired, ranging themselves before their barracks, and the inhabitants had either entered their houses or quitted the town; my effective troops, however, were now reduced to fifteen hundred men, who were divided into different detachments.

Being in *la Place royale*, with about four hundred French grenadiers, at the distance of two hundred paces from the barracks of the king's regiment, from whence there was no firing, the grenadiers pressed me earnestly to attack that regiment, though three times as numerous as themselves. Night approaching, I was undetermined what plan to adopt, when one of my aides-de-camp, M. de Rhodes, came to tell me, that he had penetrated as far as the barracks, and

and had held some conversation with the soldiers, whom he found much alarmed and disposed to submit; they already, he said, began to listen to their officers, and if I appeared, he had no doubt of their submission, 1790.

I hastened thither that moment alone. At the sight of me they appeared confounded, and attempted to lay down their arms, but I prevented them, only desiring that they would quit the town within a quarter of an hour, to which they consented. I immediately sent them orders to go to a garrison at the distance of twenty leagues: they obeyed. The officers resumed their authority and command, and in half an hour after, this regiment had entirely evacuated Nanci, and was in full march towards the place of its destination. What was very extraordinary, the soldiers demanded of me an escort, though each of them had thirty rounds of cartridge, which I had not thought it advisable to take from them, lest it should occasion some delay in
P 3 their

1790. their departure, at that time the object of greatest importance.

I gave them thirty Hussars, who conducted them to their garrison. I now announced to the Swiss regiment the departure of that of the king, sending them, at the same time, orders to leave Nanci likewise, and proceed to a distant town which I had pointed out to them. This order they obeyed, and their example was followed by the cavalry: by nine o'clock at night, the whole garrison had left the town, and were on their march: the people of Nanci were dispersed, or had retired to their houses; the strangers had departed, and every thing was quiet.

The following day, I reinstated in their functions and authority the department and the municipality, and order was perfectly re-established.

In all this affair it was very singular, and, at the same time, very fortunate, that not one

one house was either pillaged or burnt, nor was one of the inhabitants either killed or wounded, except those who had taken arms, the number of whom was very considerable, though I never received any exact account of them. 1790.

On the first of September, the three Swiss battalions demanded my permission to assemble a council of war, for the purpose of trying about eighty foldiers of the regiment of *Chateau Vieux*, who had been taken the preceding evening with arms in their hands.

The Swiss troops in the service of France, it was stipulated by the treaty entered into between the two countries, should preserve their own form of administering justice: this council condemned twenty foldiers to death, and between fifty and sixty to the galleys; which sentence was put in execution without my having a right to prevent it. About one hundred and eighty foldiers of the king's regiment,

1790. and about three hundred of the common people, were likewise taken in arms; I could not have them tried, and they were all afterwards discharged, not one being punished*.

This is what is styled the *massacre of Nanci*. It will easily be seen, that I was unavoidably hurried into circumstances which I both dreaded and had endeavoured to avoid; Fortune snatched me, as it were by the hair, out of the danger into which she had plunged me, and this was the last favour I received from her.

Can it be said then, that my conduct merited the reproaches which have been

* It may perhaps be thought that I have been too minute in my account of the insurrection at Nanci; but when it is recollected that my object in publishing these Memoirs, is to exonerate myself from those unfounded aspersions which have been thrown on my conduct in that affair, and to clear my reputation in the eyes of a people who I think entitled to such an explanation, I hope it will be found that I have dwelt no longer on this subject than was absolutely necessary for that purpose.

lavished on it, or was even in any respect reprehensible? The king's letter on the occasion, that of M. de la Fayette himself, and of the president of the assembly, all filled with exaggerated eulogiums, will shew that I acted in the name of the law, and according to the law; and the account which I have given of my conduct will evidently demonstrate, that I was hurried on by imperious circumstances which I was constrained to obey. 1790.

The above letters I shall insert, as well as the decree of the national convention; and in the course of these Memoirs it will be seen, that the assembly, at the instigation of the Orleanists, ordered a second examination into my conduct, the report of which was made by Sillery, one of the most zealous partisans of the duke of Orleans, when it received again the general approbation.

I think it necessary to add, that, merely from motives of humanity, I on this occasion

1790.

sion deviated from the political principles which I ought to have pursued, to save France from the great calamities with which she was threatened, and which she has since experienced. In whatever horror I might hold a civil war, I at that time thought it necessary, for the preservation of the king, the monarchy, and France; the duke of Orleans* had lighted up the first sparks of it, which I extinguished against my own inclination, as I was very well prepared for such an event. I would have assembled an army composed entirely of royalists, which, being soonest formed and soonest in motion, would undoubtedly have had the first successes, and this would have served to increase my forces. The king, in the different parts of his kingdom, could command about forty battalions of Swiss, German, or other foreign troops, and about one hundred squadrons, which still remained faithful to him. He would have been

* It has been proved, that the troops were incited to revolt by the agents of this prince, in conjunction with the Jacobins and other factions.

joined

joined by the nobility, and a part of the land-holders. The remainder of the army would have been divided between the constitutional party and the duke of Orleans, who was at the head of the Jacobins and the lowest class of the people, known at that time by the name of *sans culottes*. It was impossible but that the constitutional party would have sought to strengthen itself by uniting with the monarch, who, in that case, would have had the support of a party which, since the beginning of the revolution, had never appeared to favour his cause. Thus assisted by the sovereign, the constitutional party, there is reason to believe, would have crushed the Jacobins, by whom the monarchy was destroyed: for, again I repeat it, the misfortunes of France are to be attributed to the union formed between the Jacobins and the constitutionalists, though La Fayette and the duke of Orleans, who were the apparent leaders of these parties, mutually detested each other. Nothing then but a civil war, kindled by the latter, with the assistance of
the

1790.

1790. the Jacobins, could shew the royalists and the friends of the constitution their real interest, and convince them of the necessity of an union between themselves.

The king was then emerging from the degraded situation to which he had been reduced; he was regaining some degree of consideration, which, had he been well advised, might have led to a recovery of part of his former power; his ministers, at that time, were men of abilities, who saw things in their true light. The archbishop of Bourdeaux, keeper of the seals, was a man of great sense, and of that kind of sense which was wanted in those circumstances. M. de St. Priest, minister for the home department, was possessed of a vigorous and enlightened mind. M. de la Tour du Pin, minister at war, was a virtuous man, and absolutely at my disposal. As for Neckar, ashamed, abashed, and confounded by his errors, he had lost the esteem of the nation, and the confidence both of the assembly and his own party. Montmorin, minister
for

for foreign affairs, had lost the good opinion of his sovereign. His majesty thought, that in suppressing the insurrection at Nanci, (and it was with the greatest reluctance I did it,) I had rendered him an essential service; whereas, by so doing, I deprived him of almost the only opportunity of re-ascending his throne that had occurred since the beginning of the revolution. 1790.

On the third of September, the king wrote me the following letter with his own hand, which I received at my return to Metz. It strongly paints the goodness and sensibility of his heart. Unhappy prince! formed to govern a virtuous people, not the most vicious and corrupt nation upon the face of the earth.

“ St. Cloud, Sept. 4, 1790.

“ I hope, Sir, you are sufficiently acquainted with my sentiments, to be assured that your conduct at Nanci has given me the most signal satisfaction.

“ On

1790.

“ On the 31st of August you saved
“ France, and your behaviour on that day
“ ought to be an object of imitation for
“ all well-wishers to their country: indeed,
“ the manner in which you have con-
“ ducted yourself for this year past is
“ entitled to the highest commendation,
“ and particularly so when we reflect on
“ the opposition you have experienced.
“ Continue, Sir, to be guided by the same
“ maxims, and preserve your popularity,
“ which may be of the greatest utility both
“ to myself and the nation. It may be
“ the means of leading to the re-establish-
“ ment of order and tranquillity. The
“ dangers to which you were exposed gave
“ me great uneasiness till I heard from M.
“ de Gouvernet, and I feel the most sincere
“ concern for those brave men who pe-
“ rished in that distressing but unavoidable
“ affair. I request of you to point out to
“ me those with whose conduct you have
“ reason to be particularly satisfied; at the
“ same time, you will express to the na-
“ tional guards, and to the officers and
“ soldiers

“ soldiers in general, who have so bravely
 “ seconded your efforts, how sensibly I am
 “ touched by their zeal and fidelity. 1790.

“ With respect to you, Sir, you have
 “ acquired a lasting claim to my esteem
 “ and regard.

“ LOUIS.

“ P. S. I am informed, that one of
 “ your favourite horses was killed under
 “ M. de Gouvernet. I have sent you one
 “ of my own, which I have mounted,
 “ and beg of you to keep him for my
 “ sake.”

I likewise received letters from La Fayette
 and the president of the assembly, which I
 shall here insert, as well as my answer to
 the latter.

“ Friday.

“ You are the saviour of the common-
 “ wealth, my dear cousin, and your success
 “ affords me a double satisfaction, both as
 “ a ci-

1790.

“ a citizen and as your friend. My concern at the frightful situation in which we stood was equal to yours, and I regarded the execution of the decree of Nanci as the crisis of public order. With respect to that affair, many attempts have been made to mislead the people, but this does not at all surprise me, as it has disconcerted the schemes of those who love confusion; you have, however, acted on that occasion with such prudence and circumspection, that malignity finds nothing at all to lay hold of, and every doubt raised to your prejudice produces an explanation to your advantage. I have sent you a copy of a decree which was passed to-day almost unanimously, not thirty members opposing it. You will receive commissioners, the bearers of a proclamation, one part of which is become entirely useless. Their names are, M. du Veyrier, a lawyer, and secretary to the electoral assembly last year; M. Cayer de Gerville, assistant to the *procureur Syndic*, of the commune of Paris; they are both
“ men

“ men of worth, and I hope you will be
“ satisfied with them. I shall write more 1790.
“ particularly to-morrow, after having had
“ some conversation with Gouvernet, and
“ I will then answer your observations
“ concerning the state of our frontiers.
“ With respect to the internal part of the
“ kingdom, all is by no means yet quiet;
“ at Paris, within these few days, the fer-
“ mentation has much increased: however,
“ we must absolutely conquer these diffi-
“ culties which now alone obstruct the
“ establishment of the constitutional order.

“ Our union, my dear cousin, is a
“ means of serving our country, extremely
“ dear to me, as by that I have received
“ proofs of your friendship and confidence,
“ in the highest degree gratifying to my
“ feelings.

“ Adieu, my dear cousin, I shall write
“ again to-morrow. The commissioners
“ will be with you shortly after this comes
“ to hand.

“ LA FAYETTE.”

1790.

The third letter which I received was from the president of the assembly, and is as follows:

“ Paris, Sept. 5, 1790.

“ The national assembly, Sir, has passed
“ the highest encomiums on the courage
“ and patriotism you displayed in compelling to return to their duty the garrison of Nanci, and those who had joined in their revolt. Your success as a warrior can never astonish the assembly, but they are thoroughly sensible of the grief you must have felt, on being obliged to exercise your talents against soldiers accustomed to conquer under your orders; and they sympathise with you on that occasion. The glory of having avenged the laws, and suppressed the sedition which threatened to subvert them, is superior to that of having gained repeated victories over the enemies of France, and it was reserved for you to achieve both. The national assembly, Sir, commissions me to assure you of their approbation and esteem, an
“ office

" office which I execute with most singular
 " satisfaction; and am, Sir, &c. 1790.

" HENRI JESSE, President.

" P. S. I have, Sir, transmitted to you
 " the orders of the assembly, under the
 " form of a decree; and request the favour
 " of you to forward to the national guards
 " and soldiers who, under your direction,
 " were instrumental in restoring tranquil-
 " lity, the inclosed letters, which I am
 " charged by the assembly to address to
 " them. You will please to take care, Sir,
 " that they are communicated to all of
 " them."

" DECREE *of the* NATIONAL ASSEMBLY,

" Sept. 3, 1790.

" The National Assembly has decreed,
 " and decrees,

" That the directory of the department
 " of La Meurthe, and the municipalities of
 " Nanci and Lunéville, receive the thanks
 " of this assembly for their zeal.

Q 2

" That

1790. " That the national guards, who
" marched under the orders of M. de
" Bouillé, be thanked for the patriotism
" and civic courage which they displayed
" in re-establishing order at Nanci.

" That M. Desfilles be thanked for his
" heroic conduct, in devoting himself to
" spare the effusion of the blood of his
" fellow-citizens*.

" That the nation takes upon itself to
" provide for the wives and children of
" such of the national guards as were
" killed.

" That the general, and troops of the
" line, are approved for having gloriously
" performed their duty.

" That the commissioners, whose depar-
" ture has been decreed, shall immediately
" repair to Nanci, to take the necessary
" measures for the preservation of tranquil-
" lity, and to receive an exact information

* He was not yet dead of his wounds.

" of

“ of facts, in order that the guilty may be
 “ punished without regard to rank or con-
 “ dition. 1790.

“ Compared with the original, by us, the
 “ president and secretaries of the na-
 “ tional assembly, at Paris, this fourth
 “ of September one thousand seven
 “ hundred and ninety.

“ *Henri Jessé*, president,

“ *Dauchy*, sec.

“ *François Paul Nicolas Anthoine*, sec.

“ *Charles de la Cour*, sec.

“ *Dinocbau*, sec.”

The following is my answer to the presi-
 dent's letter :

“ Sir,

Nanci, Sept. 10, 1790.

“ The approbation which the national
 “ assembly is pleased to bestow on my con-
 “ duct, is one of the greatest consolations
 “ I can receive, after having been obliged,
 “ for the preservation of the laws, to em-
 “ ploy French forces against their rebellious

Q 3

“ brethren

1790. “ brethren, and turn against them those
“ arms which ought only to have been
“ directed against a foreign enemy. The
“ justice done me by the assembly will
“ no longer leave any doubt concerning
“ the motives upon which I acted; and
“ should any still exist concerning my sentiments, my honour and the dignity of
“ my station are to the assembly, and to
“ all Europe, the best securities for my
“ respect and submission to the laws, as
“ well as for my observance of the oaths I
“ have taken, and my zeal for the public
“ welfare.

“ The organ of the will of the national
“ assembly, let me beg of you, Sir, to be
“ reciprocally the interpreter of my sentiments, and to assure them, that no
“ Frenchman is a more faithful observer of
“ the laws, or a more zealous defender of
“ his country.

“ I am, Sir, &c.

“ BOUVILLÉ.

“ P. S.

“ P. S. I have communicated to the
“ troops, and the national guards, the let-
“ ters you did me the honour of addressing
“ to me for them.”

1790.

When I left Nanci all was perfectly quiet ; but the two commissioners, sent by the assembly to inquire into the causes of the insurrection, did great mischief by their extreme lenity ; and the steps they took to revive that patriotic spirit which, after what had passed in that town, was almost extinguished. One extraordinary circumstance was, that the people of Nanci, after this affair, would no longer perform the duty of national guards, but laid down their arms, refusing to acknowledge any other military authority than that proceeding from the king. The same spirit had seized the constituted authorities. It was with difficulty I persuaded the members of the department and municipality to resume their functions, and conform to the laws established by the new constitution. Nanci then had espoused the royal cause ; but to encourage

1790. the inhabitants in these principles, I knew
could be attended with no good consequences; I perceived it was only a momentary impulse, and had no reason to think their example would be followed by other towns. It was some time, however, before the commissioners could again kindle in their minds the love of liberty.

By the letters which I received from the king and the president of the assembly, some idea may be formed of the important light in which the insurrection at Nanci was viewed; eulogiums were lavished on my conduct, as though I had been the saviour of my country, whilst I was, in fact, only the blind instrument of fortune and destiny, in preventing, for a short time, its destruction. La Fayette, that Quixote of the constitution, saw no danger it had to apprehend but that to which it had just been exposed, and had escaped; he was not acquainted with the strength and resources of the enemy by which it was attacked, and by which it was one day to fall;
he

he was more sollicitous to guard against the royalists, who had no longer any power, than to crush the Jacobins, his real and most formidable enemies. 1790.

The town of Metz, as well as the province, were in ecstasies at the result of the affair at Nanci; the troops followed the example of the people, and I found myself raised to the highest pitch of popularity.

A few days after my return to Metz, I resolved to make the tour of the district under my command, with a view of informing myself of the disposition of the people and army, and to see what could still be done in favour of my sovereign.

The evening before my departure, I received the following letter from La Fayette, by the hands of one of his aides-de-camp, the same person whom he had sent to me at the time of the affair of Nanci; a man of great cunning and address, whom I looked upon in the light of a spy sent by

6

his

1790. his general, and in whom I neither had nor could have any confidence; however, he proposed serving under me, and I could not refuse him.

“ Paris, Sept. 15, 1790.

“ Yours, by the hand of M. de Gouvion,
“ I have received, my dear cousin, and you
“ may depend upon my executing your
“ commissions to the best of my abilities.
“ I had already written to the commis-
“ sioners, and to-day I have again recom-
“ mended to them what you desired. Des
“ Mottes, my aide-de-camp, comes to you
“ with an address to the national guards
“ who served under your orders, and we
“ request the favour of you, my dear
“ cousin, to communicate it to them.
“ With respect to what is going forward
“ here, I refer you to M. des Mottes: keep
“ him with you some time; he may be of
“ service to you. We are surrounded on
“ every side by ambition, intrigue, and
“ self-interest. I have been endeavouring
“ to unite the different parties upon some
“ certain

“ certain principles, which might shew us
“ exactly where we are, and what object we
“ are pursuing, and might hasten the re- 1790.
“ establiſhment of order; but their animosity
“ against each other is much greater
“ than their zeal for the public good. Your
“ expressions of friendship, my dear cousin,
“ are extremely grateful to me; at this
“ time, nothing is so necessary to our mutual
“ safety as unanimity and confidence;
“ and I am the more convinced of the necessity
“ of a strict union between us, by
“ observing daily how difficult it is to find
“ men of integrity. Adieu, my dear
“ cousin; be assured of the sincerity of my
“ attachment to you.

“ LA FAYETTE.”

The commission which I had given La Fayette was to engage the assembly to inflict punishment on some of the principal rebels who were taken with arms in their hands at Nanci, for the purpose of striking terror into the people and army: this, however, I could not obtain.

The

1790.

The complaints he makes of the division which reigned in the constitutional or democratical part of the assembly, allude to the circumstance of the Lameths and their friends having quitted his party, and united themselves to the Jacobins. Their view in doing this, was to oblige La Fayette to resign his office of commander in chief of the national guards, intending afterwards to substitute one of their own partisans. Des Mottes, aide-de-camp to La Fayette, was charged with circular letters to the municipalities, the leaders of the national guards, and the presidents of the clubs: the latter, in the major part of the provinces, had not yet openly professed the destructive principles of Jacobinism: they were composed partly of constitutionalists, and partly of *sans culottes*; the *sans culottes*, however, were most powerful. The conduct of these last was marked with as much art and boldness as that of the constitutionalists was with imbecility and incapacity; and in all public commotions, the most daring and abandoned are sure finally to gain the ascendancy.

The

The hydra of Jacobinism had for the present concealed its head; its partisans were still weak in the assembly, and made little figure there; but in Paris they openly attacked La Fayette, who relying with confidence on his Parisian army, and proud of his temporary advantage over the duke of Orleans, chief of that faction, treated their efforts with contempt, and this false security was his ruin. 1790.

In my late excursion to the frontier provinces, I remarked that the departments, composed principally of nobility and landholders, were well affected to the royal cause, but afraid to declare their sentiments. This was the case in Alsace, Lorraine, and Franche-Comté; and I was assured in confidence, by the principal members of the departments, that they would give every assistance in their power to the re-establishment of the lawful government. Out of nine departments comprised within the frontiers I commanded, six adopted the same principles as myself, and were entirely at

1790.

at my disposal ; but their offices being only ministerial, and having no connection with the police, they had very little influence over the people, who were guided by the clubs and municipalities, the constant rivals of the departments, who were regarded as composed entirely of aristocrats. In the country places of Alsace, and that part of Lorraine distinguished by the name of German, there were many who were royalists from a principle of religion. The first of these provinces was divided between Catholics and Lutherans, who mortally hated each other ; and though the latter were the least numerous, yet they were the most powerful, being more turbulent than the catholics, and having the support of the constitutional party and the Jacobins. This rendered the catholics for the most part royalists, and partisans of the old government.

The troops throughout all the provinces had returned to their duty, and submitted to the established military discipline ; but the

the whole of the French infantry was attached to the constitution, and the obedience they paid the king was only in quality of its chief; they were less at the disposal of their officers than of the municipalities and leaders of the different clubs, who, however, at present did not attempt to corrupt them, waiting, no doubt, a more favourable opportunity. The soldiers in most of the corps kept up a correspondence with the principal members of the assembly, who had their secret agents among them, for the purpose of rendering them subservient to their own views. The greater part of the cavalry and foreign troops, as I have before observed, acknowledged no authority but that of the king. The body of the people supported the constitution, but the lower orders were Jacobins; very few were royalists, except the nobility, the clergy, the ancient magistrates, and the greater part of the officers of the army, who had lost their importance in the eyes of the soldiers, and were no longer in possession of their confidence.

1790.

1790.

During my tour through the provinces, I received the following letter from La Fayette :

“ Paris, Oct. 3.

“ I shall give you no account of your
“ commissions, my dear cousin, as you will
“ receive every information concerning
“ them. There is but one thing which ad-
“ vances slowly, and that is the organiza-
“ tion of the national guards; the assembly
“ perceives the necessity of immediately
“ setting about it, but they find it an affair
“ of so delicate a nature, that it is daily
“ called for without any great inclination
“ to enter upon it; thus, other objects are
“ previously taken into consideration, espe-
“ cially the subject of the public taxes,
“ with which the assembly is going to be
“ incessantly occupied. I shall, however,
“ do all in my power to accelerate the or-
“ ganization of the national guards.

“ You are acquainted with the pro-
“ ceedings, the report, and the decree of
“ the

“ the assembly, relative to the affair of the 1790.
 “ 6th of October. ”

“ The party of Orleans is now endeavouring to involve me, and even ventures to attack me; they are drawing up a memorial, paying agents and libellists, and the prince is exercising himself in shooting at eggs with a pistol; from all this, however, I do not apprehend any thing very dangerous, particularly if the king remains longer at Paris to disconcert the intrigues occasioned by the absurd report of his departure. It is my opinion, that all this discussion concerning the 6th of October will be attended with very unfavourable effects. ”

“ Dispatch in the business of the assembly is now more necessary than ever. I regarded the union of the popular party as the speediest means of bringing things to a conclusion, provided they could once agree upon some certain points, particularly on the administration, and all
 VOL. I. D R “ the

1790.

“ the functions of the executive power;
“ but to this, private enmity and self-in-
“ terest oppose an insurmountable bar.
“ In my conversations with the leaders of
“ the two clubs, I perceived that their ideas
“ much more nearly resembled than their
“ sentiments: at present, I frequent neither
“ of them; I remain with my friends, re-
“ ceive all that come, and support those
“ who are friends to liberty, the constitu-
“ tion, and public order. A committee of
“ revision has been appointed, whose la-
“ bours will go near to digest and reduce
“ to order the constitution. It is of great
“ importance that they should make a
“ clear distinction between those principles
“ and articles which are the elementary
“ parts of the constitution, and the occa-
“ sional decrees of the assembly, which
“ ought again to be submitted to the con-
“ sideration of its members. If this com-
“ mittee should be actuated by an uniform
“ spirit, it may perform a task, by so much
“ the more useful, as it is composed of
“ members chosen from the two factions
“ into

“ into which the popular party is divided;
“ and will thence pass more quickly to the
“ assembly. 1790.

“ Adieu, my dear cousin; communicate
“ to me your orders respecting whatever
“ commissions you may have for putting
“ us in a state to defend ourselves from all
“ our enemies. I have the satisfaction to
“ inform you, that since, by your conduct
“ at Nanci, you saved your country, you
“ have been no longer troubled with the
“ friendship of the aristocrats. Once
“ more adieu, my dear cousin; be assured
“ of my eternal regard.

“ LA FAYETTE.”

The Jacobins, furious that their projects had failed, particularly at Nanci, inflamed the rabble of Paris against me, La Fayette, and the minister at war. They demanded our heads, and it was with great difficulty M. de la Tour du Pin saved his.

1790.

The assembly, whether through the intrigues of the duke of Orleans, or through fear of the multitude, who were guided by the partisans of that prince, ordered an inquiry into my conduct, and that of the minister at war, with respect to the affair at Nanci, though both had before received their approbation. The persons appointed to make this examination were chosen from among the party of Orleans, and the report was made a few months after by Sillery; we were again cleared from any imputation, it appearing that we had acted in strict conformity to the laws, and agreeably to the decrees of the assembly.

I wished to procure a decree for the purpose of establishing a more rigid discipline in the army, either by again putting in force the old ordinances relative to that subject, or by enacting new laws; I was desirous, likewise, of effecting a change in a penal code which had been recently composed for the army by the military committee

mittee of the assembly. These laws opposed the greatest obstacle to the maintenance of discipline in the army, by establishing a jury which was to take cognizance of all military offences, thus depriving the chiefs of their authority, and the laws of their effect. I likewise recommended it to the assembly to punish the ringleaders of the insurrection at Nanci, both among the soldiers and people; to pass a decree for the organization of the national guards, determining the principles upon which they were to be established, fixing their number, and pointing out their service and functions; at the same time, disarming the rest of the people who threatened and even disturbed the public tranquillity. These were the subjects of the last letter I wrote La Fayette, and many others which I had sent him before; however, my representations produced not the least effect.

By La Fayette's answer to my letter it may be seen, that the party of the duke of Orleans and the Jacobins were beginning to

1790. give him some uneasiness; among the chief of his enemies were Mirabeau, the Lameths, several of the principal democrats of the assembly, - and many others, dangerous from their boldness, intriguing spirit, and abilities.

Since the federation, on the 14th of July 1790, La Fayette's credit had been gradually declining; his jealousy and suspicion of me had increased; our correspondence was afterwards much less intimate; and I shall insert only two more of his letters. I have sometimes imagined that Des Mottes, his aide-de-camp, who accompanied me in my excursion, had found means to discover my real sentiments, and had communicated them to him.

From the situation of the provinces I had visited, from the disposition of the people, of the constituted authorities and the army, and from the unhappy condition of the king and his family, the little authority which was left them being daily retrenched; from all these circumstances, I
say,

say, I concluded that there remained but one way, not to re-establish the old monarchy, (that was now totally impossible,) but to preserve some remnant of it; to restore to the king his liberty, part of his dignity, and a few fragments of his former power. This was, to engage the emperor to march some troops to the frontiers, which he might very easily have done, as he had just effectually restored the submission of the Low Countries, where at that time he had an army. He might have reclaimed the rights of the German princes who had possessions in Alsace, which had been violated by the decrees of the national assembly; and to obtain satisfaction for this, might have been urged as the object of his hostile movements. In this case, I should have had an excuse for collecting an army composed of the best regiments of France, being well persuaded, that on this occasion they would not have dared to entrust the command of it to any other than myself, as at that time I enjoyed the confidence of the troops of the line, the national guards,

1790.

1790. and the inhabitants of the frontiers. I would then have persuaded the departments of these provinces to present an address to the assembly, requesting that the king might come to place himself at the head of his army, for the purpose of quelling, by his presence, that spirit of mutiny and licentiousness which reigned among the soldiers; I myself, and the troops at my instigation, would have demanded the same thing: and to have refused these united petitions would have been difficult, as they would have been supported by the left side of the assembly, and by Mirabeau himself, who had already offered the king his services on certain conditions: they were at that time rejected, but afterwards, when too late, as will be seen by these Memoirs, they were accepted.

The king once at the head of the army, it would have been an easy thing for him to engage the affections of the soldiers; all the officers were already devoted to his service; and in the eyes of the nation, he would

would have appeared as the preserver of peace, the emperor being as averse to war as himself. It would have been by no means difficult again to awaken the discontent excited in a great part of the people, by the rigour with which the clergy were treated, and particularly by the persecution commenced against the ministers of parishes; a discontent greater on the frontiers than in any other part of France. But if (which I could not believe) the king should not be permitted to repair to the army, although declared chief of it by the constitution, still his situation was not changed for the worse, and his conduct was not brought into question. 1790.

I was revolving this project in my mind, and had already communicated it to the principal members of the departments, who had approved of it, assured me of their attachment to their sovereign, and promised me their assistance, when I was waited upon by a person of eminence from the king; who, by way of credentials, delivered

1790.

livered to me the following letter, written in his majesty's own hand;

" St. Cloud, Oct. 23, 1790.

" I hope you are still satisfied with your
" situation, with respect to the troops. I
" seize with pleasure every opportunity
" of renewing to you the assurances of my
" esteem and regard*.

" LOUIS."

This person, who at the time I am writing is in London, gave me an account of the unhappy situation of that prince and his family, with which I was already but too well acquainted; and he informed me, that it was rendered daily more insupportable by the rigour and inflexibility of La Fayette, who was become their jailor; he assured me, that the king had an entire confidence in me, of which his majesty was going to give me a striking proof, by com-

* It will easily be perceived, that the king was prevented by circumstances from expressing himself more fully in his letter, or even naming the bearer of it.

municating

1790.

municating to me a design he had formed of quitting Paris, where he was in a state of confinement, and retiring to one of the frontier towns under my command, leaving it to me to fix the place: there he meant to collect round him the troops, and such of his subjects as still retained their fidelity; to attempt to bring back to a sense of their duty the rest of his people, misled by factious men; and in case other means should fail, to call in the assistance of his allies for the restoration of order and tranquillity to his kingdom. I begged this gentleman to assure his majesty of my fidelity, and perfect attachment to his person, which had hitherto led me, notwithstanding my extreme reluctance, to remain in France amid the troubles, disorder, and anarchy with which it was overwhelmed; I, however, observed, that this step was a measure of great danger and hazard; that should it fail, (and its success was very doubtful,) it would inevitably be attended with the ruin both of the sovereign and monarchy, and even endanger his majesty's life: I represented

1790.

sented to him, that I had lately acquired a degree of popularity, even in the army, which enabled me to render my sovereign essential service, without having recourse to means uncertain in their effect: in fine, I opened to him the plan which I had formed, and which I have already stated. He then assured me, that the emperor, and all the other allies of the king, had insisted on his majesty's leaving Paris, and being at perfect liberty, before they took any steps in his favour. I had now nothing to do but to obey.

As this project was not to be put into execution till the approaching spring, the king left me all the intermediate time to make the necessary dispositions, with which he desired to be acquainted. It was settled, that from this time I should maintain a correspondence with him in cypher, by means of a third person on whom we could rely. This correspondence was very closely carried on for eight months; not one letter miscarried, or was intercepted, nor was the
least

least suspicion entertained. It would undoubtedly be very interesting, could I here insert that epistolary correspondence, which was very extensive, but the importance of it obliged me, for the king's safety, to burn every letter as fast as I received it, trusting to my memory to retain the most essential objects they contained. In them, the king unbosomed himself to me, without reserve, upon his situation, misfortunes, and future projects, which all breathed an ardent desire for the re-establishment of peace and tranquillity; which he would have purchased with the sacrifice of all his personal advantages, unwilling to have recourse to arms, till all other means should have been tried and found ineffectual.

1790.

At the time I received this communication on the part of his majesty, I had at my disposal a very considerable force. The national guards and troops of the line, not only at Metz, but in all the different provinces under my command, had given me many proofs of their attachment and confidence;

1790.

fidence; I was, besides, on very good terms with the constituted authorities. I remarked too a great change in the public opinion for the better; this, however, was but of short duration. It proceeded from several causes, among which were the abolition of the three existing orders, the civil constitution imposed upon the clergy, and the oath exacted of the priests, which had driven many of them from their parishes, where they were replaced by the vilest members of their order; to these we may add, the little confidence which the people began to have in the national assembly, whose labours were found to produce nothing but anarchy and disorder, a circumstance extremely alarming to all persons of property, and pleasing to none but the very dregs of society.

The power of La Fayette, as I have already said, was now on the decline; his credit decreased daily. The Jacobins of Paris, guided and directed at that time by the Lameths and Mirabeau, seemed wholly occupied

1790.

occupied in effecting his destruction; and for that purpose they joined the duke of Orleans, from whose vengeance he had every thing to apprehend. The former were only influenced by ambition; they wished to oblige La Fayette to resign the command of the national guards of Paris, that they might dispose of it in favour of themselves or their friends. The Jacobins laid aside for a short time their plan of universal anarchy and disorder, to bend all their strength against the hero of the revolution. Robespierre, Danton, Brissot, Marat, and Camille Desmoulins acted then but in subordinate stations; the first alone was member of the assembly, where he possessed neither credit nor influence, but where, from the first moment of his introduction, he announced his republican system which he afterwards succeeded in establishing, and of which he became the chief and tyrant: the others wrote for both parties; some of them even had been bought by the court.

The

1790.

The king having given part of the sum allotted for his civil list to La Fayette, who flattered him with the promise of procuring him with it some partisans, that general distributed it among the public writers, rather with a view of engaging them to support his own cause than that of his sovereign. Instead of endeavouring to increase his majesty's power and authority by means conformable to the constitution, as that prince most earnestly desired, he seemed wholly engaged in depriving him of that shadow of sovereignty which he still retained, and in adding to those indignities which he daily experienced. He narrowed the limits of his confinement, and strove to render it yet more irksome and insupportable : far from acting in concert with me, who had acquired a great increase of authority though but for a time, his jealousy and suspicion increased ; he not only ceased to co-operate with me, but even tried by every method to effect my ruin, in which he was but too successful, as will be seen hereafter.

In

In the beginning of November, I wrote my first letter in cypher to the king; it was on the subject of his project to retire to some frontier town. I took the liberty of representing to him the consequence of such a step, which should be the result of mature reflection; I assured him at the same time, that on every occasion he might depend on my entire submission to his will. 1790.

The towns which I proposed for the place of his retreat, were Montmedi, Besançon, or Valenciennes; the latter, it is true, was not within my jurisdiction, but I knew that the municipality there was attached to the royal cause, that the inhabitants were well disposed, and that the garrison being principally composed of foreign troops, might therefore be relied on. Valenciennes was only about the distance of forty leagues from Paris; on the road there were no considerable towns; and as this was the way by which the English and many other foreigners entered
s France,

1790.

France, the people were here less suspicious, and the clubs and municipalities less watchful, from the number of carriages which were continually passing and repassing. At this place I could have joined the king there if he had thought proper. Besançon was seventy leagues distant from Paris: the people there were at that time not ill-disposed, and I imagined that the garrison might likewise be depended upon; I could besides have rendered this place much more secure, by placing there some foreign troops, particularly Swiss. Franche-Comté, in which this town stood, had recently been added to my command. Besançon had likewise the advantage of lying near Switzerland, the cantons of which country, by their last treaty with the king, were to furnish on the first requisition four-and-twenty thousand men. Montmedi was eighty leagues from Paris, on the farthest part of the French frontier, about one mile from the territory of the Austrians, and sixteen from Luxembourg, which might afford
5 essential

essential assistance. Under protection of the fortress, which though not large was very strong and contained few inhabitants, there was a camp extremely convenient for a small body of troops. The place fixed upon by the king was Montmedi, of which he gave me notice, ordering me in the course of the winter to make all the preparations necessary for assembling there in the spring a military force, and whatever else should be requisite; he besides repeated to me, that the execution of his project being still distant, I had time sufficient to make the proper dispositions, and acquaint him with them. 1790.

In the course of the month of November, La Fayette, the leaders of the Jacobins, and even the Aristocrats of the assembly, united in a design to procure the dismissal of the king's ministers. The former had recourse to their usual means; they inflamed the minds of the people against them, and made motion after mo-

1790. tion in the assembly, which were supported by the galleries; even the orators on the right side of the assembly were loud in their invectives against them, thinking, without doubt, their attachment to royalty not sincere, though they were men extremely proper for their station, and very capable of serving his majesty in his present unhappy circumstances: however, the best proof of attachment they thought they could give their sovereign, was to resign their employments, which they did all, with the exception of M. de Montmorin, minister for foreign affairs, who was a friend of La Fayette's, and the tool of all parties.

To the old ministry succeeded men with whom I was unacquainted, chosen principally by the Jacobins and constitutionalists. The minister at war was recommended by La Fayette; his name was Du Portail, an old officer of engineers who had served with that general in the American

American war ; was much attached to him, and seems to have been entirely at his disposal. With this person I never had had the least connection, nor did I even know him. Neckar, ashamed and mortified, had already quitted both his office and France, having lost the esteem and confidence of all parties. 1790.

The resignation of M. de la Tour du Pin, as may easily be imagined, gave me great concern ; with him every thing seemed possible, but with none else who was not possessed of the same principles, and between whom and myself there did not exist the same confidence. My regret was still more increased, when I perceived, by the conduct of his successor, with what sort of a man I had to deal : he seemed to me to serve the constitutionalists from principle, to temporize with the Jacobins, and to act on every occasion as the interest of La Fayette and his own required. La Fayette, at that time vigorously attacked by
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1790. the Jacobins, was endeavouring to keep on good terms with these formidable enemies, who seemed bent on his destruction; for this purpose he directed all his efforts against the king and royalists, who had no longer any power to hurt him, but might have rendered him service. In the situation which I held, I could likewise have given him assistance, and it was my intention to have done so, had he acted properly; but no sooner had he at his disposal the office of minister at war, than he seemed wholly occupied in weakening and reducing my power. In consequence, a few days after these changes had taken place, I received a private letter from the king, informing me that on the representations made by La Fayette and the leading men on the left side of the assembly, they were going to abridge the power with which I had been entrusted, and to deprive me of the liberty of putting in motion by my own authority, without any orders from government, the whole of the troops within the district I commanded.

This

This privilege I considered of the greatest importance, as it gave me, in case of any great event, the disposal of the troops, and the power of assembling an army if I thought proper. The king writing to me to know, if I considered this liberty as a thing of much consequence, I, in my answer, pointed out to him its utility, and begged him to use his utmost efforts to continue to me one of the greatest means I could possibly have of serving him; but in a few days I received another letter from him, in which he told me, that all his endeavours had been frustrated by the obstinacy of his minister and La Fayette: I was in consequence forbid, in the name of the king, to remove the regiments, or dispose of them in other garrisons, without an express order from the government.

Notwithstanding this, I still preserved my popularity with the people and the troops, the most perfect tranquillity reigning at Metz, and in all the provinces under

1790. my command : the municipalities continued to have the same influence over the soldiers, but I was on a very good footing with those bodies, and they were now no longer under the influence of the clubs.

CHAP. X.

The king makes proposals to me to facilitate his departure from Paris, intending to retire to one of the frontier towns under my command.—My observations on the danger of such a step.—I assure his majesty of my fidelity and zeal for his service.—Means which I propose for the execution of the king's project.—I become the object of jealousy and distrust.—Give in my resignation of the command of Alsace.—Proposals made me by Mirabeau.—His plan for saving the king and monarchy.—Uneasiness of La Fayette upon that subject.—Death of Mirabeau.—Change in the opinion and disposition of the people.—The causes of this change.

ABOUT the latter end of January 1791 1791.
 I received notice from the king, that
 he hoped to be able to accomplish his
 departure from Paris in the month of
 March

1791. March or April; he desired me to inform him what route he must pursue to arrive at Montmedi, and what plan I had adopted to secure his retreat to that place. I wrote him word, that there were two roads which led from Paris to that fortress; one through Rheims and Stenay, upon which there were very few towns which it was essential to avoid; the other through Châlons, Saint Menchoud, and either Varennes, or Verdun, a fortified town the more dangerous, as its garrison, inhabitants, and municipalities were detestable. To avoid this inconvenience then, it was necessary to take the road of Varennes, in which town however no post-horses were to be procured; another disagreeable circumstance which must be submitted to. I next urged his majesty to engage the emperor to march a body of troops to the frontier of Luxembourg near Montmedi, in order that I might have a pretext for assembling an army on my side, and for making all the preparations necessary for the camp I had projected; this would likewise, I observed, be

be an additional security to his majesty, when he should arrive at the place of his retreat. 1791.

In a few days I received an answer to this from his majesty, in which he informed me, that he preferred the road to Varennes, wishing to avoid Rheims, where he had been crowned, and where he was more known to the people; he at the same time told me, that he had received a formal promise from the emperor to march a body of twelve or fifteen thousand men to the frontiers, on the shortest notice.

What his majesty's projects were on his arrival at Montmedi, or what conduct he intended to adopt towards the assembly, I never could learn; though whoever is acquainted with the religious character of the king can entertain no doubt, that when his majesty solemnly engaged to support the constitution, it was his intention scrupulously to observe his oath; such was likewise

1791.

likewise my intention when, sacrificing my reluctance, by the king's express desire I entered into the same engagement. But this constitution was in itself so defective, so incomplete, and discovered daily so many errors in its formation, that to maintain and execute it was impossible, as events have since proved; besides, the constitutionalists being all men of intriguing, turbulent characters, it was impossible to be faithful to their constitution without being continually on your guard against their schemes and machinations, and this again exposed you to their jealousy and hatred. Respect and attachment to the king, though ordered by the theory of the constitution, were considered by them as criminal. If then the situation of the king was painful and trying, mine was likewise irksome in the extreme. What must be the feelings of a man of honour compelled, by conscience and his duty, to act constantly in opposition to his principles, and obliged to appear in a feigned character before

before the different factions, who called
perfidy whatever tended to oppose their
madness and villany?

1791.

I imagine then that his majesty would have been guided in his conduct by the disposition of the people and army, and that he would not have employed force, unless he found it impossible to make any reasonable arrangement with the assembly, which, however, was earnestly desired by several of its principal members, at the head of whom were Mirabeau, Duport, and even the Lameths. These clearly perceived the defects of their constitution; they saw that it naturally paved the way to a republic, which they did not desire, and, perhaps, to an anarchy, which they dreaded; the greater part of them confessed that they had followed no plan in the fabrication of their government, and had been unavoidably carried farther than they intended: but at this time the Jacobins were most powerful in the assembly; they had now regained

1791. regained their ascendancy, and the duke of Orleans, their chief, still pursuing his disorganizing schemes, attacked with greater violence than ever La Fayette, who found himself vigorously pressed by that prince's partisans at Paris. Alarmed at the danger of their situation, many of the constitution-
alists were anxious to disengage themselves from it; Mirabeau himself had been bought over by the king, who, had he once arrived on the frontier, placed himself at the head of one part of his troops, and called in the assistance of his allies, might have forced the assembly to come to reasonable terms of accommodation. Thus, had his majesty executed his project at that time, there were still resources left for extricating himself and his kingdom from that frightful situation into which they were fallen; it still was possible to establish some kind of order: but we shall shortly see that things soon took an unfavourable turn, and continued changing for the worse till the moment of the king's departure, so that

that what was possible in the month of January, was no longer so in the month of June. 1791.

I about this time received a letter from the king, in which he told me, that violent suspicions were entertained of me by all parties; that La Fayette, in particular, regarded me with a jealous eye: he informed me, likewise, that it was in agitation to withdraw Alsace from my command, and confer it upon general Luckner, which circumstance seemed to give him great uneasiness. In the answer which I sent his majesty I observed, that conceiving it impossible to preserve the government of this province, I would anticipate the intentions of the assembly by resigning it myself; but that he ought to insist upon my being succeeded by some person whom I could depend upon; and I pointed out to him M. de Gelb, lieutenant-general, a native of Alsace, where he resided.

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1791.

Independently of his military talents, (being, though never known at court, one of our best general officers,) M. de Gelb was a man of the strictest probity, much attached to the king and monarchy, and a person who reposed the most unlimited confidence in me. I besought his majesty then to insist on the government of Alsace being given to no other person than him; this he promised to do, and seemed to be entirely of my opinion. I wrote, likewise, to the minister for the war department, informing him, that the extent of territory under my command prevented me from fulfilling the duties attached to my office; that at the time I accepted a charge of such magnitude and importance, the situation of the army, in some measure, imposed it on me as an obligation, a spirit of mutiny and insurrection having manifested itself among the troops throughout the whole kingdom, but more particularly on the frontiers: I observed to him, that now the state of things being changed, and the same necessity

necessity no longer existing, order being happily re-established in the army, and tranquillity in the provinces, it was my wish to resign the command of Alsace and Franche-Comté, to the affairs of which provinces, from their great distance, it was impossible for me to pay that attention which I thought necessary. 1791.

To this letter I received an answer containing many eulogiums on my disinterestedness; and informing me, that my resignation with respect to Alsace was accepted, but desiring me still to retain the command of Franche-Comté. I now informed M. de Gelb, that the command of Alsace would be proposed to him, but it was with great difficulty I conquered his reluctance to accept of this office; it was only on condition that I should assist him with my instructions, and should dispose of him, his troops and resources, in the manner I thought most proper for the exclusive service of his majesty.

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1791.

As soon as my resignation of Alsace was known, the king was earnestly solicited by the minister Du Portail, and by La Fayette, to confer the command of that province upon general Luckner, which, however, he constantly refused, informing them with a determined tone of voice, that he intended to bestow it on M. de Gelb, to whom it was accordingly given. Thus then, though I no longer commanded in Alsace, I still preserved the same influence there; I still, in case of any pressing necessity, could have found the same resources there; and had, besides, for a short time, quieted the jealousy and distrust excited by my situation.

In the beginning of the month of February, I received a letter from the king, the purport of which was, to inform me that a proposition, on the part of Mirabeau and M. de Montmorin, would be made me by the count de * * *, a foreign nobleman in much credit at court, and the friend of both the above gentlemen; and that he should

should give the count a letter under his own hand, which he had requested for the purpose of accrediting him with me.

1791.

In the king's letter was the following passage: "Though these men" (speaking of Mirabeau and some others of the same description,) "are by no means estimable characters, and though I have bought the services of the former at an enormous price, yet I am of opinion that they can be of some utility to me. Certain parts of their project appear to me worth adopting; you will, however, hear all they have to say without being too open with them yourself, and you will communicate to me your remarks on the subject."

In consequence, on the following day, the count de * * * arrived at Metz, and waited on me with a letter from his majesty, couched in the following terms:

T 2

" Paris,

1791.

" Paris, Feb. 4, 1791.

" It is with pleasure, Sir, that I avail
" myself of the opportunity offered by the
" journey of the count de * * * to Metz,
" again to assure you of my entire satisf-
" faction with the manner in which you
" have conducted yourself in a situation so
" full of difficulties. I can only beg of
" you to continue still to act as you have
" hitherto done, and to assure you of my
" entire esteem and gratitude.

" LOUIS."

To the count de * * * I pretended entire
ignorance of the object of his mission. He
began by telling me of the great esteem
which Mirabeau had for me, and the con-
fidence he placed in me †; assuring me that
he was now entirely devoted to the interest
of the king, and would have been so long
before, had it not been for the opposition

† I had never yet seen this famous character, nor
had the least communication with him directly or in-
directly.

he

he had met with from Neckar: he took care to inform me, that Mirabeau had within a short time received from the king six hundred thousand livres, besides a monthly allowance of fifty thousand livres, and that promises to a great extent had been made him, in case he should render his majesty any signal services: he added, that Mirabeau was under some apprehensions from my connection with La Fayette, whom he regarded, and with reason, as the greatest obstacle to the execution of his projects. I assured the count de * * *, that this connection existed more in appearance than reality; that I had great reason to complain of his conduct towards me; that my only reason for uniting with him was, the opinion I entertained that he possessed both the means and inclination to check the evil at least, if not to do any active good; but that, for some time, I had reason to believe that he was deficient in both. I told him that, on the contrary, I had always been of opinion that the genius, talents, and firmness of Mirabeau were equal to this

1791.

1791. great emergency; that if any man could save the king and the monarchy, it was he; and as this was the only object I had in view, he might depend on my exertions to second his endeavours; I only requested to be made acquainted with his plan.

Upon this, the count de * * * told me, that the intention of Mirabeau was to procure the dissolution of the assembly, and the liberty of the king, by the force and will of the nation itself; establishing this principle, that the representatives of the people, at this assembly, were not possessed of the powers necessary to make a change in the ancient constitution; such a measure being contrary to the instructions given by all the provinces to the deputies sent by them to the States General, which instructions had neither been altered nor revoked; and that the king, being deprived of his personal liberty, could not invest with his authority the new laws they had enacted. The validity of this objection being admitted, he then intended to procure

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addresses

addresses from the different departments, praying that the present assembly might be dissolved, a new one convoked, with the powers requisite for making such alterations in the constitution as should appear necessary; and that the king should be restored to his liberty, and the enjoyment of a reasonable authority. These addresses were to be supported by the people of Paris, whom Mirabeau seemed to think at his disposal, when he should have removed some of the leading men of the Jacobin faction, whom he had already denounced to the assembly. 1791.

The count de * * * likewise informed me, that Mirabeau reckoned six-and-thirty departments whose conduct he could direct, and I myself could depend upon six; besides, as I have already observed, there was hardly a department in the kingdom which was not well affected to the royal cause: Mirabeau was further to deliver to me the king and royal family, either at Compiègne or at Fontainebleau, where I should have surrounded them with my best troops.

1791.

When he had concluded, I told the count de * * * that I perfectly approved of the plan he had communicated to me, and promised to give it every support in my power, desiring him to assure Mirabeau that he might depend on my concurrence; I likewise wrote to the king, and acquainted him with my opinion of this project, which I preferred to that of his retiring to Montmedi; I advised him to consent to its execution, to load Mirabeau with gold, to give and promise whatever he demanded; assuring him, that it was no longer people of honour and integrity who could save him, and re-establish the monarchy: such could only, in circumstances like the present, form vain and useless wishes, whilst those same unprincipled villains, whose boldness and address had been equal to causing the mischief, knew likewise the cure for it, and perhaps possessed the means.

It will appear astonishing, without doubt, that I should act with so much confidence towards Mirabeau, when my conduct towards

towards La Fayette was marked with such distrust. The reason is obvious; avarice and ambition were the reigning passions of the former, and these the king could amply gratify when re-seated on his throne: now, I very well knew that Mirabeau possessed too much discernment not to perceive that the gratitude and favours of a prince, whom he should have contributed to restore to his power and authority, were much to be preferred to popular favour, and the temporary situation of leader of a party: La Fayette, on the contrary, was an enthusiast, and intoxicated with self-love, whose price could neither be known nor reached; a description of men at all times dangerous, but particularly so during a revolution!

It is probable, that La Fayette had obtained a knowledge of the advances made me by Mirabeau, for on the seventh of February he wrote me the following letter:

“ Paris,

1791.

Paris, Feb. 7, 1791.

"It is now a long while, my dear coun-
 "sin, since I wrote to you; and, indeed,
 "since my last conversation with your son,
 "I have hardly learned any thing worth
 "relating. Paris has been torn by con-
 "tending factions, and the whole kingdom
 "has been a prey to anarchy. The most
 "violent of the aristocrats dream of a
 "counter-revolution, in which opinion the
 "priests concur through fanaticism; the
 "more moderate members of that party
 "have not courage sufficient to act follies,
 "but they make themselves amends by
 "talking: the advocates for monarchy,
 "and all those who rank themselves on
 "the right side of the assembly, are only
 "desirous of performing some part, but
 "have neither the means nor talents ne-
 "cessary for that purpose, and should they
 "become any thing, will be likewise aris-
 "tocrats: on the left side, we have a con-
 "siderable number of well-meaning men
 "who are waiting for events; a club, such
 "as that of 1789, losing itself in philoso-
 "phical

“ phical speculations; likewise, a club of 1791.
“ Jacobins, the body of which mean well,
“ but whose leading members spread disor-
“ der every where, which is increased by
“ the associations formed in the capital
“ and provinces; these, unhappily, aim
“ more at number than selection, and are
“ guided by personal interests and passions.
“ With respect to the ministers, they are
“ in a revolutionary state, and have no
“ other rule than to comply with the po-
“ pular party, lest they should fall victims
“ to its vengeance. The courtiers are as
“ formerly, stupid, abject, and aristocra-
“ tical. The queen is resigned to the re-
“ volution, hoping that the public opinion
“ will change a little, but dreading a war.
“ The king is only solicitous for the ge-
“ neral tranquillity, beginning with his
“ own.

“ I had forgot to give you some account
“ of myself. I am violently attacked by
“ the leaders of all the parties, who re-
“ gard me as an insurmountable obstacle
“ to

1791.

"to their views, having found that they
 "can neither corrupt nor intimidate me?
 "the first measure in any bad project is to
 "attempt my overthrow: I have likewise,
 "and for very good reasons, drawn on me
 "the hatred of two parties, that of the
 "aristocrats, and that of the duke of
 "Orleans, which is more powerful than
 "it appears to be. Lameth too, with
 "whom I formerly was connected, and
 "Mirabeau, who accuses me of contempt
 "for him, are my enemies; and if to the
 "above I add those who are instigated to
 "attack me by bribes, those who make
 "me the subject of their libels, and those
 "who are enraged against me for pre-
 "venting them from plundering Paris, I
 "believe I shall have given you a com-
 "plete list of all my adversaries: however,
 "with the exception of a few conspicuous
 "characters who are misled, I have on my
 "side all upright men, from the lowest class
 "of the people to the highest, with the ex-
 "ception of those who are bigotted aristo-
 "crats. I am on good terms with the
 "national

1791.

“national guard, unless it be a few Ja-
“cobins, and those the refuse of that
“party, for all well-meaning Jacobins are
“attached to me, notwithstanding I still
“decline attending their meetings. Within
“these two months I have had less com-
“munication than ever with the court,
“which I found to answer no good pur-
“pose; and my only object is to be of
“service to my country: I am afraid
“however that advantage may have been
“taken of my negligence to engage in
“some intrigues; nay, I am well assured,
“that they were on the point of com-
“mitting some great imprudence, but
“happily stopped short on the brink of
“the precipice. The queen has such bad
“advisers, and the little heads at the Thuil-
“leries are so sanguine in their hopes, and
“so little calculate obstacles, that it is to
“be feared lest the king, that invaluable
“security for public order, should be
“made the instrument of private ambi-
“tion. This is an account of the state of
“things in general; I shall now add my
“observations.

“ Some

1791.

“ Some of my friends, and particularly
 “ Eméry, are labouring with me to lay
 “ down a line of conduct which may fix
 “ the constitution on a solid basis, and
 “ restore tranquillity to the nation. The
 “ most distinguished members of the as-
 “ sembly, and even Mirabeau himself,
 “ will be obliged to support this associa-
 “ tion, and for that he is particularly well
 “ adapted. The courts of justice are now
 “ established, and decrees have passed the
 “ assembly for settling the police of the
 “ kingdom, and appointing juries: this is
 “ acting with energy, propriety and ef-
 “ fect.

“ You have then acceded to the pro-
 “ posal of acting in concert with me,
 “ which my heart and the love I bear my
 “ country prompted me to make you: to
 “ one of my friends you said the other
 “ day, ‘ Did La Fayette and I rightly
 “ understand each other, we might firmly
 “ establish the constitution.’ I set too
 “ high a value on your friendship and
 “ opinion,

" opinion, not to communicate to you 1791.
" freely my ideas, and request yours. In
" a few days I will write to you still more
" circumstantially.

" The most earnest wish of my heart
" is to see the revolution speedily and
" happily concluded, and the constitution
" established so that it cannot be shaken;
" to effect these objects, I will employ
" both my interest and efforts, and when
" they are accomplished, I desire to be
" nothing more in France than an *active*
" *citizen*, and when a war breaks out,
" your aid-de-camp without either rank
" or command.

" LA FAYETTE.

" P. S. There are many now engaged
" in forming great projects, but which
" proceed from little ambition; in pro-
" portion as they come to my knowledge,
" I will give you my opinion of them.
" It belongs to honest people like our-
" selves, to proceed directly to some
" known

1791.

“ known and useful end. All these mysteries and intrigues are only serviceable to knaves, as all the chimeras of men of weak understandings only give advantage to their enemies.”

The postscript of La Fayette's letter was the only object of it. He had by some means been apprised of the project of Mirabeau, and wished to let me know he was acquainted with it. The contents of this letter, moreover, shew the absurdity and extravagance of La Fayette, and his extreme security with respect to the Jacobins, his enemies; and his constitution was a phantom which he ever pursued with the same ardour and the same blindness. It is true that at Paris a club was formed by the partisans of the constitution, and was first held at the Hotel de la Rochefoucault; this club afterwards increased, and even rivalled that of the Jacobins at Paris; but it had lost all its power and consequence, whilst in the provinces the clubs had united both parties, and the Jacobins prevailed.

The

The passage in La Fayette's letter which speaks of some errors into which attempts had been made to lead the king, alludes to a plan which had been formed to bring about a counter-revolution at Lyons; it was to have been effected by the emigrants who had taken refuge at Turin; these were to have been supported by the nobility of the neighbouring provinces, and even by the inhabitants of Lyons itself, who in their turn, it was thought, would be assisted by the troops, their chiefs having been already gained over to the cause. This dangerous project, which was to have taken place in the month of January, was put a stop to by the king: he himself wrote me word, that it was contrary to his inclination and consent, and that he had endeavoured by every method in his power to prevent it.

Emery, so frequently mentioned by La Fayette as his friend, was a lawyer of Metz, one of the most distinguished and most esteemed members of the national assembly;

1791.

assembly; he was a man of good sense and abilities, and though a strong partisan of the revolution, yet possessed of the strictest integrity. About a month before I received this letter, he had passed a few days at Metz; during which we had a good deal of conversation about La Fayette, though I was always extremely guarded in what I said. I told him that I thought La Fayette blameable, if not for having neglected to do good, at least for not having prevented evil. He owned himself of my opinion, both with respect to La Fayette and the defects in the constitution. He assured me that the assembly had been led away by its factious members, and had only thought of demolishing the old establishment without substituting any other in its place; he observed however that they would certainly repair the mischief which had been done. I advised him and his friends, if not yet too late, immediately to set about it.

In one of these conversations with Emery, he said to me, " But what part do

“ you act, Sir, in this drama, for nobody
 “ is acquainted with your opinion?” I 1791.
 made answer, “ I am neither aristocrat nor
 “ democrat: I am a royalist, and conform
 “ to your constitution, which I think de-
 “ testable, because my sovereign has ac-
 “ cepted it; but should he refuse any longer
 “ to acknowledge it, I likewise will with-
 “ draw my obedience from it.” He re-
 plied, “ You are right—were I by birth
 “ noble, I should think and act as you do;
 “ but a man like me, brought up to the
 “ profession of the law, must naturally
 “ desire a revolution, and cherish a consti-
 “ tution which raises him and his equals
 “ from a state of degradation.”

I wrote La Fayette the following answer
 to his letter, of which I preserved a copy:

“ Metz, Feb. 11, 1791.

“ I have indeed, my dear cousin, been
 “ long deprived of the pleasure of hearing
 “ from you, but I attributed it to your
 “ occupations, which I suppose prevented

1761. " you from writing. The account which
" you give me of the state of the assembly,
" of Paris, of the different factions and
" parties with which that capital is dis-
" tracted, and of the spirit which prevails
" among them, I know to be very true,
" at the same time that it is in the highest
" degree alarming: several persons upon
" whom I can rely, and among others
" Mr. Emery, have given me the same de-
" scription; all agree in the greatness of
" the evil, but none know of any remedy
" for it. You would give some consola-
" tion, and revive my drooping hopes,
" by informing me that you, in conjunc-
" tion with Mr. Emery, and some others
" who possess the abilities necessary, were
" pursuing a plan which might give stabi-
" lity to the constitution; but let me re-
" mind you, that it is now a twelvemonth
" since you expressed the same desire.
" Have you not so long assured me, that it
" was intended to establish a national force,
" without which, the best laws are of no
" effect; and was it not then much easier
" for

“ for you to do this than at present? Yet, 1791,
“ since that time, what has happened?
“ Many parties have been formed in oppo-
“ sition to yours; the Jacobins have ac-
“ quired such extensive influence, and such
“ a decided superiority, that it is next to
“ an impossibility to crush them, and be-
“ yond the reach of calculation to estimate
“ the evils which they will bring upon
“ France; disorders have increased at Paris
“ and in the provinces; the troops, whom
“ they then endeavoured to seduce rather
“ by specious reasoning than by corruption,
“ have been since brought over, and have
“ broke through every restraint of disci-
“ pline; such a spirit of venality pervades
“ the army, that the soldiers in general
“ are at the disposal of him who will pay
“ them best, whilst their officers and
“ leaders, persecuted and disgusted, with-
“ out either power or importance, see no
“ possibility of bringing them back to their
“ duty. A fermentation has arisen among
“ the people, and spreads daily; the cities
“ and great towns, with the exception of
“ some

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“ some few, as yet restrained by the pru-
“ dence of the administrative bodies, are
“ entirely guided by the revolutionary
“ clubs; the people in many of them begin
“ to shew symptoms of discontent, which
“ are still more prevalent in the country
“ places, where the removal of the barriers,
“ and the oath exacted of the priests, have
“ disgusted the people, who refused obedi-
“ ence to the decrees of the assembly in
“ these points, till compelled by the ap-
“ pearance of a military force. Already
“ even do we hear it said and propagated,
“ that the assembly has no constituent
“ power, the tacit consent of the people
“ being not sufficient, as they can with-
“ draw that consent at pleasure; that the
“ king is not free, nor even the assembly;
“ that public opinion may change, and that
“ it even ought to change; and should this
“ actually be the case, what would be the
“ consequence? Should a foreign army
“ likewise present itself upon the frontiers,
“ (and it is in the list of possibilities,) and
“ encourage a spirit of discontent till it
“ increased

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“ increased to an insurrection, partial at
“ least, if not general; I ask you, whe-
“ ther the edifice you have been build-
“ ing would not be overthrown from the
“ foundation, and you buried in its ruins?
“ Yet, all this I foresee; and I am con-
“ vinced that every reasonable man, who
“ is neither carried away by enthusiasm,
“ nor biassed by interest or ambition, will
“ be of my opinion. What is to be done
“ to prevent these misfortunes? Convene
“ a national assembly, invested with powers
“ which can neither be revoked nor called
“ in question; put the king in possession
“ of power sufficient to enforce obedience
“ to the laws, at the same time restoring
“ to him such a degree of liberty, that his
“ consent cannot be compelled; by this
“ means you will remove all pretext for
“ protests and remonstrances, which sooner
“ or later will be attended with a bad effect.
“ Thus, then, giving to the assembly
“ legal and sufficient power for making
“ laws, and to the monarch who presides
“ over them his entire liberty, and power
“ sufficient to enforce the observance of
“ them,

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“ them, you will fix a free constitution on
“ a solid basis, and avoid a series of anar-
“ chy which must necessarily terminate in
“ utter ruin. But it may be said, is all
“ this possible? That I am ignorant of.
“ Can I, or ought I even to attempt it?
“ Unable, myself, to accomplish so desir-
“ able an object, all that remains for me is
“ to communicate my ideas to some who,
“ like you, are by their situation provided
“ with the means of contributing towards
“ it, observing silence with respect to
“ others: I shall pay deference to the pub-
“ lic opinion, be obedient to the laws
“ enacted by the existing authorities, and
“ confine myself solely to the performance
“ of my duty, without exceeding the limits
“ which it prescribes me. Such is the line
“ of conduct which I have laid down for
“ myself, and which I shall uniformly pur-
“ sue, while I live under the French go-
“ vernment and continue in its service.
“ Adieu, my dear cousin; be assured of
“ my regard and attachment.

“ BOUILLÉ.”

By

By this letter I made a last effort to open La Fayette's eyes to the danger of his situation. I told him my sentiments with freedom and sincerity; I pointed out to him the road he must pursue to disentangle himself from the difficulties with which he was surrounded, to release the king from his present degraded condition, and avert from France the still greater calamities with which she was threatened. 1791.

Being apprised, that the day after the departure of the count de * * * for Metz, La Fayette, by his own desire, had had a conference of three hours with Mirabeau, at the house of Emery in Paris, I was in great hopes, that either suspecting or being informed of his project, he was desirous of giving it his support and assistance, from a conviction that there was no other way left to escape from the labyrinth in which he found himself bewildered; and, indeed, had it been possible for an union to take place between persons of principles and characters so opposite as myself, Mirabeau, and La Fayette, we might have been the means of saving the

1791. the nation. Mirabeau had, in some manner, at his disposal the majority of the assembly, besides having great influence over the Jacobins; La Fayette, though his power was declining, had still many partisans at Paris, and likewise in the provinces; I had regained much of my credit among the troops, and even part of my former authority: I was too, as I have said, in favour with the national guards, and the constituted authorities of the frontier provinces; the assistance of these two men would then have increased my strength, and I, in my turn, could have given them support. But all these projects quickly vanished; Mirabeau, a few days after, was attacked with a violent disorder and died, not without strong suspicion of having been poisoned by the chiefs of the faction of Orleans. La Fayette again resigned himself to little intrigues; and as for myself, my credit and popularity began to lose ground, and my resources to diminish: so that a few months after, when the king wished to make use of them, they were become too weak to serve him.

Whilst

Whilst La Fayette was directing all his anger and vengeance against the royalists and aristocrats, and was exposing the royal family to the daily insults of the people, whom he seemed in some manner to join for the purpose of still further degrading his sovereign, and eradicating every sentiment of respect or affection for him from the minds of part of his subjects, he himself was openly attacked by the duke of Orleans. Towards the latter end of February, he was obliged at Vincennes to engage the *sans culottes*, commanded by Santerre, one of the chief partisans of that prince. These he dissipated for the time, without depriving them of the power of again assembling in greater force, and in a manner still more formidable.

The duke of Orleans had leaders and secret agents dispersed over every part of France. The Jacobin club at Paris, whose operations he directed, kept up a correspondence with all the rest in the kingdom; there was not a town in France, however small,

1791.

small, which did not contain these societies, presided over or led by men of the boldest and most enterprising characters, consummate in crime and villany. Jacobinism was a monster whose head was at Paris, and whose arms extended over all France; the means its partisans made use of to effect their destructive purposes were alternately force and artifice. They pretended favourable dispositions towards the constitutionalists, whilst meditating the ruin of La Fayette, their chief, whom they pursued rather to gratify the personal vengeance of the duke of Orleans, than from any apprehensions of his power; they associated themselves with the friends of the constitution, made the constitution itself subservient to their views, and at the same time waited only till the royal authority should be completely annihilated, to destroy it. If ever there was a conspiracy of greater extent than this, none was ever conducted with more method and ability, nor ever displayed more boldness and energy in its operations.

About

About the beginning of March, I received a letter from La Fayette, which was the last he wrote me. 1791.

" Paris, March 7, 1791.

" I congratulate you, my dear cousin,
" on the marriage of Madame de Con-
" tades, and I hope you will not doubt of
" the interest I feel in it. Within these
" few days we have been very disagree-
" ably situated, particularly on the 28th
" of February; the different affairs, how-
" ever, of Vincennes and the Thuilleries,
" have released us at least for a few days
" from the attacks of our enemies. Your
" correspondence with Emery must have
" made you acquainted with what has
" past, so that in this I shall confine my-
" self to speaking of the nomination of
" M. de Gelb to the departments of the
" Rhine. This choice of the king's, I
" know, is much more agreeable to you
" than any other he could have made;
" and the talents, virtues, and patriotism
" of M. de Gelb render him a very
" proper person to fill that post. I have,
" my

1791. " my dear cousin, a favour to beg of you
" in respect to him ; that you would en-
" gage him to take for one of his aides-du
" camp, Desmottes, who by the decrees
" of the assembly is made eligible to that
" employ ; and his courage, understand-
" ing, interest with the national guard,
" and attachment to us both, make me
" anxiously solicitous to see him placed in
" a situation where he may be useful, and
" make known his talents. This kindness
" on the part of M. de Gelb I should
" consider as a singular obligation, but do
" not think myself entitled to the liberty
" of requesting it ; as you are on terms
" of intimacy with him, you will be able
" to render me that service. Adieu, my
" dear cousin ; my best wishes attend you.

" LA FAYETTE."

The object of this letter, it appears, was to procure for Desmottes, who was already aide-de-camp to La Fayette, the same office under general Gelb, commandant of Alsace. This Desmottes, as I have before observed,

observed, was the confidential friend of La Fayette, and acted as his spy; he had attended me in my tour on the frontiers, had narrowly watched my conduct, and had given an account of it to his employer: as he was to act the same part with M. de Gelb, I cautioned that gentleman against him; in consequence he refused to accept his services, and I found means to elude the request of La Fayette. The 28th of February, which he mentions in his letter, and is the only political subject it contains, was the day on which the affair took place between him and Santerre at Vincennes.

The answer I returned was merely complimentary; I avoided entering into the discussion of any thing of importance; I was now more than ever convinced that nothing was to be expected from him: indeed his political existence was fast drawing to a conclusion, and great apprehensions were to be entertained from the efforts of his despair, which would rather
be

1791. be directed against the royalists and aristocrats, the least dangerous of his enemies, than against the Jacobins his more powerful adversaries.

A few days afterwards, I received a letter from the king in cypher; which informed me, that he had fixed on the latter end of April or the beginning of May for the time of his departure from Paris. Having determined to take the road of Varennes for Montmedi, he desired me to establish a chain of posts from Châlons to that place. He informed me that he proposed travelling with his whole family in a single coach, which he had ordered to be constructed expressly for that purpose. In the answer which I returned his majesty, I took the liberty of representing to him, that the road he had chosen would be attended with great inconvenience, from the circumstance of being obliged to place relays of horses to supply the defect of post-houses; this I observed would either compel me to impart the secret to some person,

1791.

person, or would be the means of exciting suspicions; and the more particularly so, as at that time myself and all the chiefs of the army were more than ever objects of distrust, on account of the conspiracy of Lyons discovered a few months before, in which they were all known to have been engaged: the residence of the emigrants likewise on the frontier was another reason why we were watched with a jealous eye; these frequently entered France, and advanced up to the gates of Metz, committing disorders which were laid to my account, though I had not the least correspondence with them. I endeavoured then to persuade his majesty to go to Montmedi by the way of Rheims or Flanders, passing through Chimay and crossing the Ardennes: I represented to him the impropriety of travelling with the queen and his children in a carriage of peculiar construction, which could not fail of attracting general observation; I advised him, on the contrary, to make use of two English diligences for himself and

x family,

1791. family, taking with him some person of approved fidelity, who might if necessary shew himself, and at the same time serve as a guide, neither the queen nor himself being acquainted with the road. I proposed for this purpose, the marquis d'Agoult, major of the French guards, a man of good sense, courage, and firmness, and extremely proper for such an undertaking. I likewise objected to his majesty, the great inconvenience which might result from placing a chain of posts upon the road: if they were weak, they would answer no other purpose than exciting distrust in the minds of the people, who already began to entertain sentiments of that kind, the Jacobins labouring with all their might to alienate their affections as much as possible from the king; if, on the contrary, these detachments were considerable, they would give cause to the most violent suspicions, and even, in some manner, make known the project of his majesty: besides, it was not in my power to put in motion complete corps, but by an order from the king, counter-

counterfigned by the minifter at war, a
perfon not to be confided in, but, on the
contrary, an object of diftruff. I infifted
on the neceffity of a movement on the part
of the Austrian troops, in the environs of
Luxembourg and Montmedi; I wifhed
them to encamp at Arlon, between thefe
two places, obferving to his majefty, that
if he decline making ufe of them, ftill
they would ferve to keep the afsembly in
awe, by fhewing them that he was not
without refources.

His majefty, in his anfwer, informed
me, that he was firmly refolved to go by
the way of Varennes, having, for the rea-
fons I have affigned, a particular objection
to fhewing himfelf at Rheims, and a ftill
greater averfion to croffing the territory of
the emperor, in his way to Montmedi,
being determined not to go beyond the
confines of his dominions. He would not
difpenfe with my placing detachments on
the road, nor would he confent to difpofe
of his family in two different carriages; he
promifed,

1791.

promised, however, to take with him M. d'Agoult, and to wait till the emperor had marched a body of troops to the frontier, near Luxembourg, before he took his departure.

Being now informed of his majesty's final determination, I began to make the proper dispositions for putting it in execution. I demanded of him the sums necessary to defray the expences, and he transmitted to me a million of livres in assignats; seven hundred thousand of which, after the melancholy conclusion of this affair, I delivered to Monsieur, the king's brother; the rest was either employed in the secret purchase of forage, ammunition, and provisions, or was distributed to the colonels of my best regiments, for the purpose of being converted into gold, in order to make occasional advances to the soldiers; they never, however, in the least suspected my real object in confiding these sums to them. I next raised an alarm on the frontier, where I announced a great movement on
the

the part of the Austrians, which did not exist; but it gained so much credit, that M. de Montmorin, minister for foreign affairs, wrote to me to assure me of support, which assurance, however, did not prevent the patriotic club, and the municipality of Metz, from sending a deputation to the assembly, complaining that their frontier was not secure, and that the necessary precautions for their safety were not taken. This step facilitated my design, by enabling me to collect at Montmedi, provisions, warlike stores, artillery, and the materials necessary to form an encampment; and furnishing me with a pretext for placing some good regiments in the neighbourhood of that town.

The distrust, however, of the assembly, of La Fayette and his partisans, of the town of Metz, and almost all those within the district I commanded, daily augmented. The minister at war took from me my best regiments, particularly the foreigners, and gave me in return the worst in the whole

1791.

army; if I still retained some few regiments upon which I knew I could rely, it was only because I in some manner refused to give them up, and engaged the interest of the departments in my behalf. Since the affair of Nanci, the enraged Jacobins had put in practice every artifice to torment me; they united with the constitutionalists, solely in the persecution of the royalists; and the king, more than ever, became the object of their insults. La Fayette wishing to destroy the opinion, that his majesty and the royal family were in a state of confinement, persuaded them to pass some days at St. Cloud: but just as they were on the point of departing, the populace, instigated by the Jacobins, surrounded the carriages, and, notwithstanding the efforts of La Fayette and the national guard, compelled them to return to the Thuilleries.

The Jacobins, finding it somewhat difficult again to infuse a spirit of mutiny into the troops, and persuade them to renounce their obedience to their chiefs, (an effort particularly directed

1791.

directed against me, and the general officers under my command, who almost all possessed the confidence of the soldiers,) endeavoured to draw them to their clubs by sending them invitations, which, however, I forbid the soldiers to accept, and they obeyed. The ground on which I issued this proclamation, was a decree of the assembly, by which it was enacted, that no troops should be admitted to these societies: the members, likewise, were enjoined not to receive them. This decree had been passed in the beginning of the September preceding, immediately after the general insurrection which took place in the army; but the minister at war, M. du Portail, who was influenced in all his actions by La Fayette, now wrote to the assembly demanding its repeal; this was granted, and I was compelled to abandon the soldiers to all the arts employed to seduce them; so rapid was their effect, that in a very few months afterwards almost all the French infantry expelled their officers, chose others from among themselves, and in a short time were entirely under the

1791. direction of Jacobin leaders, having forsaken La Fayette to follow Dumourier.

Of the inconsistency of the former of these, and his party, some idea may be formed, on recollecting the apprehensions expressed both by him and the assembly, at the time of the insurrection of Nanci; and comparing the opinions contained in the letters he wrote me on that occasion, and in those which he had before written me, with his present conduct. Such a comparison must produce a full conviction of the weakness of his character, the versatility of his principles, and the mediocrity of his understanding; and will prove, that so far from being a proper person to direct a revolution like that of France, he was not even capable of conducting one in a small Italian state, such as Lucca or Modena.

I had now made all the dispositions and preparations necessary for the king's departure, which, as I have observed, was to take place in the beginning of May; every thing

1791.

thing at Montmedi was in a state of readiness to receive him, and measures were taken to collect a small body of troops under the cannon of the fortress, one mile from the territory of Luxembourg. The ammunition and provisions of every kind were arrived, and nothing further remained to be done, when the troops again became so vitiated, that out of all those which were in Lorraine, *les Evêchés*, and Champagne, there were not more than eight or ten battalions, and the Swiss or Germans, upon which I could depend; the whole of the French infantry were so corrupted, that there was not one regiment which I could venture to place near the king. They had carefully withdrawn the best troops from my command, and I could not now reckon more than thirty squadrons which retained, or which I supposed to retain, their fidelity to their sovereign; the corps of artillery was so bad, that I could not have found cannoneers sufficient to serve a single piece.

The

1791.

The sentiments of the people were not much more favourable. In the provinces, and particularly on the frontier, as I have already said, they appeared for a short time dissatisfied with the assembly and the constitution, but they were now become more firmly than ever attached to both.

This change is principally to be attributed to the artifice of the Jacobins, who industriously circulated reports that the emigrants were entering France, followed by an army of foreign troops, which was to be joined by all the aristocrats of the kingdom: plots were said to have been formed by the latter, and all the chiefs of the army were accused of having traitorously held a correspondence with foreign powers, and engaged in a design to betray the strong places, and even the army itself, into the hands of the enemy.

Reports like these, which are always credited by the people in time of a revolution, seemed now more particularly entitled to

to belief; the royalists who remained in France were constantly breathing out their just vengeance in threats, which in some manner justified the alarm so assiduouſly propagated by the revolutioniſts, whiſt the emigrated royaliſts, by their imprudence, appeared ſtill more to confirm it. The populace in all the principal towns, led on by factious men, indulged themſelves in all the licentiouſneſs of Jacobiniſm; the nobility, the prieſts, and even all ſober citizens who were not clamorous and violent in ſupport of the conſtitution, were daily expoſed to the threats and inſults of the mob, and the perſecutions of the Jacobins. The officers of the army, abuſed and ill-treated by their ſoldiers, over whom they retained hardly the ſhadow of authority, were only reſtrained by my intreaties from quitting an employ which afforded them neither honour nor reſpect; nay, which could not even be held without perſonal danger. Contempt, indignity, threats, and even the proſpect of an ignominious death, were the bitter fruits of their fidelity in the diſcharge of their duty

1791.

duty and their attachment to their sovereign; yet very few apostates were found among them, though both art and violence were put in practice to seduce them; unmoved by menaces, insults, and persecution, they remained faithful to that principle of honour which had ever guided their conduct.

I acquainted his majesty with the situation and dispositions of the people and army, and urged him more strenuously than ever (if he still persisted in his project) to solicit the support of a body of Austrians; I foresaw, that even should the king reach Montmedi, still there would be a terrible movement excited by the Jacobins, even though the assembly and the constitutional party should pursue moderate measures, which since the death of Mirabeau, as the king had no longer any partisan of note on the left side of the house, was hardly to be expected: I considered it as much more probable, that in such a conjuncture the two parties would form an union; in which

case, from the weakness of my resources, I could not have maintained myself at Mont-
medi; and the king, which next to a civil
war was what he most feared, would have
been obliged to quit the kingdom. How-
ever, to one of these he now inevitably
exposed himself; for in the present state of
things, it was next to an impossibility,
though nothing could be more desirable,
that any amicable arrangement could take
place, men's minds being in such a state of
fermentation.

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The principal subject of my apprehen-
sions were the nobility who had left the
kingdom, and were now mostly upon the
frontier, expecting a counter-revolution to
be effected by force, with the assistance of
foreign powers: totally ignorant of the
situation of France, they took the revolu-
tion for a momentary insurrection, and
relied on an internal party which no longer
existed, and on resources which were merely
imaginary. I was afraid of again seeing
the king surrounded with courtiers, and
dreaded

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dreaded lest the wrecks of those great bodies, the clergy, nobility, and magistracy, justly enraged at the barbarous treatment they had experienced, and animated by the spirit of revenge, should be able to lead his majesty into dangerous measures, contrary to that wisdom, prudence, and firmness which ought to regulate his conduct on the present occasion. In short, whichever way I looked, nothing but difficulties presented themselves, and every thing announced still greater misfortunes than those we had already undergone: I saw the king and monarchy drawn with irresistible force towards their destruction, and was myself obliged, in spite of my repugnance, to be an instrument in the dreadful catastrophe; for, unhappily, the king had by experience learned the baseness, treachery, and perfidy of men, which had rendered him distrustful and suspicious: had I then ventured to express my disapprobation of his majesty's scheme, had I represented to him, in too strong terms, the dangers to which he was going to expose himself, I might have excited in his mind

mind doubts of my zeal and attachment to his cause. Frightful, indeed, was my situation! I had scarcely any hopes that his enterprise would succeed; and all my trust was, that his majesty, terrified at the dangers and difficulties attendant on it, would abandon his project at the moment of execution, before he had betrayed himself.

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In the mean time, La Fayette, pressed by the chiefs of the Jacobins, thought himself obliged to give in the resignation of his office, as commander of the national guards of Paris; but being earnestly solicited to retain it, by the municipality, the national guards themselves, and the general voice of the Parisians, excepting the lower orders, and the factious leaders who directed them, he consented to resume it, and held it a little while longer, after having lost his power, importance, and even his credit with the people; but his weakness had for some time being apparent, and his part was now drawing to a conclusion. Since the beginning of January, the king had reduced the
fums

1791.

sums of money which he had till then given La Fayette, for the purpose of preserving him a few partisans, and paying some public writers, who, however, served the cause of La Fayette himself rather than that of his sovereign: this reduction considerably diminished both the credit of the former and his influence over the public. I now received no more letters from him, and our correspondence had in a manner entirely ceased. The Lameths, his enemies, made me some proposals, inviting me to an union with them; these I answered in civil, but vague terms.

CHAP. XI.

Anecdotes of the duke de Biron.—Dispositions which I make to secure the king's safe retreat to Montmedi.—He is arrested at Varennes.—I march to his majesty's assistance, but find him set out on his return to Paris.—An order is issued for my arrest.—I arrive at Luxembourg.—Decree of the national assembly against all concerned in the king's flight.—Letter of M. Beaubarnois.

ABOUT the beginning of April I received a visit at Metz from the duke de Biron. This nobleman was a member of the constituent assembly, and an intimate friend to the duke of Orleans, whose party he constantly supported, though, I believe, he never was either the accomplice or the confidant of that prince's crimes. Being employed under my command, I con-

1791.

1791.

ceived a great friendship for him, not only on account of his amiable qualities, but his probity, sincerity, and chivalrous spirit. In our conversations, he expressed himself with great justness on the situation of the kingdom, with feeling for that of the king, and with contempt of the assembly and the parties by which it was divided; he seemed earnestly desirous that the king should be restored to his liberty, dignity, and authority, and that the old constitution should be again established, either in its entire form, or with such alterations as circumstances rendered unavoidable.

I could not help testifying my surprise, to hear language like this from the friend of duke d'Orleans, who had destroyed every vestige of the old government, and for two years unceasingly persecuted the king, keeping the nation in a continual ferment. I told him, that I did not suppose him concerned in the criminal conduct of that prince, but I observed, it was astonishing, if such were his sentiments, that
he

he still continued attached to him and his party. 1791.

He excused the duke of Orleans, by assuring me, that he was at first actuated by motives of personal animosity to the king and queen, but more particularly the latter*; and had by artful and wicked men been carried further than he intended: that he had wished to stop, and had applied to the king for pardon, purposing to throw himself at his majesty's feet; but that being refused, he had become desperate, and seeing he had nothing to expect from his sovereign's clemency, he had no longer kept any measures. The duke de Biron added, that, for himself, he did not approve such a

* The causes of the difference which existed between the duke of Orleans and the court were three: 1. The refusal of his request, during the American war, of the reversion of the office of high admiral of France, then filled by his father-in-law, the duke de Penthièvre. 2. His banishment in 1788, on account of his conduct at the royal sitting held in the parliament at Paris. 3. The stop which, at the instigation of the queen, was put to the marriage of his daughter with the duke d'Angoulême.

1791.

resolution; but as the friend of that prince, and engaged in his party, he thought he could not consistently with his honour* forsake him.

“ But how does it happen,” replied I, “ that you, a man of good sense and pure principles, have not gained such an ascendancy over your friend, as should enable you to direct his actions to the public good?”

“ The duke of Orleans,” answered he, “ is weak, and I am still more so: but though want of resolution has laid him at the disposal of dangerous men, who have misled him, yet of this be assured, that it is our party which will save both the king and kingdom.”

The day following, Biron called on me, and delivered me in writing the substance

* How do men misapply this sacred word, which ought to engage them in the support of virtue, not of guilt.

of

of what he had said the preceding evening, which was the profession of faith of a determined aristocrat. In giving it me, he said, "Keep this writing, which I have signed with my name, and if I and my party do not fulfil all that I have promised you, make what use of it you think proper."

1791.

This paper I kept by me for some time, but have since burned it: I saw that his professions were sincere, but he was deluded, and I pitied him. Soon after he returned to Paris, and with him general Heyman our common friend, who commanded under me at Metz. This gentleman demanded of the queen an audience, which was granted: its object was to propose a plan which he had concerted with the duke de Biron, for the escape of the king and his family from Paris, and for securing their retreat, either to one of the places under my command, or into Alsace. The queen replied that she should refer it to his majesty; accordingly M. Heyman

1791. received the king's thanks, with the assurance that he was determined not to quit Paris, and that, besides, he was not sufficiently assured of my sentiments, to place such confidence in me.

All this I was informed of by the king himself, who wrote me an account of this affair; neither of them having ever spoken to me on the subject. This anecdote appeared to me so extraordinary, that I thought it incumbent on me to insert it: we may from this circumstance conclude, that many men have been engaged in the revolution, and the horrors which it has produced, rather through the facility of their dispositions, or through the desire of ameliorating the lot of the people, and contributing to the general welfare, than from views of private ambition. This may particularly be asserted of the constitutional party, almost all of whom stopped short at sight of the crimes to which the revolution gave birth, and having been first the dupes, were afterwards made the victims of the Jacobins.

Some

Some time in this month, which was 1791.
April, I dispatched for Paris, M. de Go-
guilas. I gave him a letter in cypher for
the king, and having communicated to
him the dispositions I had made, I desired
him to explain them to his majesty, to
receive his orders, and to return about
the latter end of the month, or the begin-
ning of May, bringing with him his ma-
jesty's final instructions. His regiment, at
that time in the neighbourhood of Nanci,
was one of those which I destined for
Montmedi: he himself was to provide the
first relay of horses, which it was intended
to place at Varennes, and I was to furnish
the second, which was to be stationed be-
tween that town and Montmedi. I had
acquainted the king, that as yet I saw no
movement of the Austrians upon the fron-
tier, and I conjured him to wait till that
circumstance took place, before he deter-
mined on his departure.

In the beginning of May, M. de Go-
guilas returned. He brought me a letter
Y 4 from

1791. from the king, in which his majesty informed me that he had reason to believe the Austrian troops would be at Arlon before the middle of June, and that he proposed leaving Paris on the fifteenth of the same month; he said however, that he would acquaint me more particularly with the exact day, desiring me in the mean time to complete my dispositions, and make every preparation necessary. In my answer to his majesty, I told him that by the beginning of June every arrangement would be made, when I would transmit an account of them for his majesty's approbation, by the hands of M. de N * * * and M. de Goguilas.

The following was the plan which I had formed. I had given orders for assembling a small body of troops to cover Montmedi, and secure the king's route from Châlons to that place. I had disposed of eight foreign battalions, the only infantry I could collect, at the distance of one, two, and three days journey from the

the latter place, and these, with thirty squadrons, composed the whole of my force. At Montmedi I had a train of artillery, consisting of sixteen pieces, independent of the numerous cannon of the fortress, which might be made use of at a moment's warning; and whatever was necessary for the support and service of an army of this force was already deposited in the town. The regiment of *Royal Allemand* was posted at Stenay, a squadron of hussars at Dun, and another at Varennes. Two squadrons of dragoons were to be at Clermont the day the king should pass; these were commanded by count Charles de Damas, in whom I had the greatest confidence; he was to place a detachment at St. Menchoud, and fifty hussars were in the same manner to be stationed at Pont de Somvele, between Châlons and St. Menchoud. The pretext of which I intended to make use for placing these two last detachments, was, that they were intended to escort a sum of money coming from Paris for the payment

1791. } ment of the troops. Thus, conformably to the wish expressed by his majesty, the whole road from Pont de Somvele to Montmedi was occupied by troops destined to secure and protect his retreat.

On the 27th of May, the king wrote me word that he proposed setting out the 19th of the following month, between twelve at night and one in the morning; that he should proceed in a common coach as far as Bondi, which was one post from Paris, and there take his own carriage; at this place likewise was to be stationed one of his *gardes du corps*, intended to serve as a courier; with instructions, in case the king did not reach Bondi by two o'clock, (a certain proof that he had not been able to effect his escape,) to proceed directly to Pont de Somvele to announce the circumstance, in order that I might be informed of it, and have time to provide both for my own safety, and that of all those concerned with me. The king added, that if he should not be recognised

1791.

cognised on the road, and there should be no movement among the people, then he would pass *incognito*, and make no use of the escort, which might follow him a few hours after. He desired me to send him M. de N * * * or M. de Goguilas, for the purpose of giving such information as would be necessary on the road. The day after the receipt of this letter I dispatched those two gentlemen from Metz: the former I ordered to repair to Paris, there to wait the king's commands. I desired him to quit that capital about twelve hours before his majesty, and to give orders to his people to be at Varennes on the 18th with his horses, having pointed out to them the place where they were to remain till wanted. On his return from Paris he was to stop at Pont de Somvele, take the command of the detachment of hussars he should find stationed there, and conduct the king as far as St. Menchoud; on his arrival at this place, he was there to leave the fifty hussars who had escorted the king, having given them orders to guard the

1791.

the road leading from Paris to Varennes and Verdun during four-and-twenty hours, and to suffer none to pass or repass. I delivered into his hands orders signed by the king, which enjoined him and the officers under his command, as they should answer for their neglect, to employ the force at their disposal in defence and for the protection of his majesty and the royal family. I likewise gave him in charge, that in case the king should be stopped at Châlons, or at any other place after that town, he should unite all the troops he could collect from Varennes, Clermont, and St. Menchoud, and use his utmost efforts to liberate his majesty, assuring him that I would march to his assistance with all the forces I could assemble.

I gave him five or six hundred louis in gold, to distribute to the soldiers at the moment the king should appear. With these instructions he set out for Paris.

To count Charles de Damas I gave the order for the march of his regiment,

1791.

which was to be at St. Menchoud on the 19th, and to remain there the 20th, on which day the king was to pass through that town. I likewise put into his hands an order from the king, mentioning the conduct to be pursued by the two squadrons under his command, who were to serve as an escort to his majesty. I repeated to him the instructions which I had before given to M. de N * * *, in case the king should be stopped at Châlons, or elsewhere.

Two days afterwards, I dispatched M. de Goguilas to the king, at Paris, with the particulars of whatever could contribute to secure his retreat; I ordered this gentleman to make Stenay, Dun, Varennes, and St. Menchoud in his way, for the purpose of again examining that road, in order that no precaution might be neglected; and I directed him to join me either at Longwy, Montmédi, or Stenay, a few days before the king's departure, to communicate to me his majesty's final instructions.

On

1791.

On the 13th of June, I took my departure from Metz, under pretext of visiting the frontier places towards Luxembourg. I had so thoroughly persuaded the people, that the Austrians were assembling a body of troops in that part, (though, in fact, they had made no movement whatsoever,) that I was enabled to march into the environs of Montmedi the few good regiments which still remained to me. I could only employ two Swiss battalions of the garrison of Metz, and some squadrons drawn from the towns of Thionville, Longwy, Mézières, and Sedan, which all lay near Montmedi: the whole of the French infantry, as I have already observed, was thoroughly bad.

On the 15th, I received, at Longwy, a letter from the king, in which he informed me, that his departure was put off till the 20th, at the hour before mentioned; he told me, that he could not have the marquis d'Agoult in the same carriage with himself, the governess of the royal children, who was to accompany them, having refused to
abandon

abandon her privilege of constantly remaining with her charge. This delay in the king's departure greatly disconcerted my measures. I had already given orders for the departure of many of the troops, and particularly the two squadrons who were to be at Clermont the day the king intended to pass through that town: as I was obliged to double the time of their stay in the place, suspicions began to arise, which were still heightened by the negligence of M. de N * * *, in not apprising the officer charged to place the relay at Varennes, of the circumstance.

1791.

M. de Goguilas was now returned from Paris; he told me that the king, to whom he had explained the most minute circumstance of his route, was perfectly satisfied with the dispositions made, and would conform to every thing agreed upon.

On the 20th of June, I repaired to Stenay. On the 21st, I assembled the general officers under my command, who were near

1791.

near this place; I acquainted them, that it was probable the king would, in the night, pass through the gate of Stenay, and that by break of day he would arrive at Montmedi; I charged general Klinglin to prepare a camp under the cannon of the last-mentioned town, for eight battalions and thirty squadrons, pointing out the spot where I would have it placed. I ordered him, likewise, to get every thing in readiness for the reception of his majesty, for whose residence, and that of the royal family, I destined a castle situated behind the camp; this was also to serve as head-quarters, as I did not wish to shut the king up in a town, and thought him safer with his army. I sent general Heyman to fetch two regiments of hussars who were on the Sarre, fearing lest they should be prevented from reaching Montmedi, by the movement which I foresaw this event would occasion both among the troops of the different garrisons and among the people. I pointed out to him a cross road, by which he might avoid Metz, Thionville, and Longwy, through which the

the common road lay. I left general d'Hoffelize at Stenay, with the regiment of royal Allemand, ordering him to have the horses of that regiment saddled at the beginning of the night, and to hold himself in readiness to march at break of day; I likewise ordered him to detach fifty men, to take their station at a place between Stenay and Dun by ten o'clock in the morning, there to await the arrival of his majesty. 1791.

To M. de Goguilas, I gave the orders addressed by the king to the commanders of the different detachments, instructing him to repair the same day, June the 20th, with fifty hussars, drawn from the squadrons at Varennes, to Pont du Somvele; to remain there the 21st; and as soon as the courier who was to precede the king should arrive, to quit that place for the purpose of distributing to the different commanders of the troops stationed on the road, who as yet were ignorant of the real object for which they were employed, his majesty's orders.

1791. The relay at Varennes he was ordered to place without the town, on that side where the king was expected to approach. I desired him to give me notice of his majesty's arrival, by means of two officers whom I was to send him, one of whom was my second son, whose instructions were to remain quiet at the inn where the horses intended for the king were, not to stir out, nor be seen, and to wait for M. de Goguilas.

With respect to myself, I was to take my station between Dun and Stenay, there to wait for the king with a relay of my own horses, and a detachment from the regiment of royal Allemand, which was to escort the king to Montmedi: the rest of the regiment was intended to follow after. I likewise gave it in charge to M. de Goguilas, to inform the commanders of the different detachments, that if his majesty should not be recognised, and there should be no movement among the people, that then they were to suffer him to pass *incognito*, and not mount their horses till a few hours

hours after, to follow him to Montmedi; but on the contrary, should the king be stopped, they were directed immediately to apprise me of the event, to unite their several forces, and under the command of M. de N * * *, use their utmost efforts to rescue the king from his situation.

1791.

All these dispositions, to the most minute particular, had been agreed upon with his majesty; he was likewise informed of the place where I was to take my station, in order, with facility, to assemble my troops, and march to his assistance if circumstances should require it. Thus, then, every arrangement being completed, and happily, without exciting any suspicion in the minds of the people of the neighbouring towns and villages, at nine o'clock in the evening I set out from Stenay. On my arrival at Dun, knowing the disaffection of the inhabitants, I would not enter the town, but remained on horseback near the gate; I imagined that the king would reach this place between two and three in the morning,

1791. and that the courier would arrive before him
at least near two hours.

Here, then, I waited till it was four o'clock, when day-light beginning to appear, without having heard any news of the king, I hastened back to Stenay, that I might give my orders to general Klinglin and the regiment of royal Allemand, in case any accident had happened to the king which it was in my power to remedy. In about half an hour I arrived at Stenay, when just as I reached the gate, the two officers whom I had sent to Varennes, and (to my great astonishment) the commander of the squadron of hussars stationed in that town, came to inform me, that about half past eleven the king had been arrested there. If I was surprised to see the commander of the hussars come to announce this news, I was not less so that it was brought so late. On questioning them relative to the causes which had led to this event, all I could learn was, that the troops employed had been seduced, and had not done their
duty:

duty: they told me, that the people on hearing the alarm had flown to arms, and that the national guards were flocking from all parts to Varennes. 1791.

Having received this information, I resolved to put myself at the head of the regiment of royal Allemand, which constituted my principal force, and march to the king's deliverance, purposing to attend him to Montmedi, in order to protect him from the town of Stenay, which was disaffected, and that of Sedan, which was still more dangerous on account of the disposition of its numerous inhabitants and its garrison. Accordingly, I ordered the above regiment quickly to mount their horses; general Klinglin was directed to march to Stenay with two squadrons, and to remain there; to send a battalion of the German regiment of Nassau, which was at Montmedi, to Dun, for the purpose of guarding the passage of the Meuse, which was an object of great importance: and to direct towards Stenay the Swiss regiment of Castella, then on its march to Montmedi:

1791. Montmedi: lastly, I commanded part of a squadron of hussars which were at Dun, and the detachment from the regiment of royal Allemand posted between that town and Stenay, to march with all speed to Varennes, imagining that they might at least prevent the national guards of the environs from forming a junction with those of the town. The commander of this squadron of hussars, however, had not waited my orders, for he set off the moment he heard of the king's arrest.

Having thus made my arrangements, I only waited for the regiment of royal Allemand, which was a long while in leaving the town, though the preceding evening I had ordered them to be ready to mount before break of day. In vain did I send my son five or six several times to hasten the commander: I could undertake nothing without this regiment, and I confess I confided in none but myself to lead it. As soon as it was clear of the town, I informed the men, that the king was arrested.

1791.

rested by the people at Varennes, and then read them his majesty's orders which enjoined the military to escort him, and to use their utmost exertions for the protection of himself and the royal family. I found them all in the best disposition imaginable, and having distributed among them four hundred louis d'ors, I placed myself at their head, and began my march. From Stenay to Varennes is about five-and-twenty miles, through a mountainous country where the roads are extremely bad. I now regretted having been so late informed of the king's detention. I might have been apprised of the event two hours sooner, had a messenger been sent the instant of his arrival at Varennes, consequently might have set off at three o'clock instead of five, the hour at which I actually began my march. I was in despair at the time lost, not that I was afraid of no longer finding the royal family at Varennes; I did not conceive it possible that the municipality of that town would dare to compel the king to return to Paris;

1791.

and I supposed regard had at least been paid to that part of my instructions which directed after the king should have passed, that no couriers should be permitted to go the road of Clermont or Varennes, consequently that no orders could have been transmitted from the national assembly. All my uneasiness proceeded from the obstacles which, from the delay in the arrival of the assistance I was bringing, might arise either to his majesty's deliverance, or to his safety in pursuing his rout; difficulties and dangers which I knew were every moment increasing, and in consequence used all possible diligence.

At a short distance from Varennes, I overtook the detachment from the royal Allemand which I had sent on before; they had been stopped at the entrance of a wood by the national guards, who were firing on them. Having dispersed these, I placed myself at the head of the detachment, and being closely followed by the rest of the regiment, arrived about a quarter

1791.

ter past nine near Varennes. I was proceeding to reconnoitre the place with a view of attacking it, when without the town I perceived a troop of hussars, which proved to be part of the squadron posted at Dun; they had marched to the king's assistance, but had not been able to gain admittance into the town. M. Deslongs, who commanded them, came to me, and acquainted me, that the king had been gone from Varennes full an hour and a half. It was then half past nine: he told me that he had been into the town, and had spoken to the king: that he had demanded his majesty's orders, and had informed him, that I was on the way with some troops, requesting him to wait my arrival: his majesty's reply was, "I am a prisoner, I can now give no orders; only tell M. de Bouillé, that I am afraid it is out of his power to render me any essential assistance, but that I hope he will do all he can." M. Deslongs told me, that the people and municipality, on the arrival of one of M. de la Fayette's aides-

1791.

aides-de-camp, had compelled the king to re-enter the carriage in which he had travelled, and return to Paris; and that already he must be at a great distance. He added, that when he reached Varennes with his detachment, he found the bridge broken down, and sought some place where the river was fordable, but unsuccessfully; upon which he had addressed himself to the national guards posted behind the bridge, requesting that his detachment might be suffered to enter the town: this was refused, and all he could obtain was permission to enter alone, for the purpose of speaking to his majesty, having first received an assurance from them, that they would suffer him to return when he desired it. M. Deslongs confirmed what I had before been told, that the hussars stationed in Varennes had been corrupted, that the dragoons at Clermont had refused to march, and that the king had been arrested about half past eleven, whilst seeking the relay which he had not been able to find. All the circumstances

cumstances of this affair appeared to me a mystery, nor could I form any idea of the causes which had led to them. I asked him if he had seen M. de N * * *, M. de Goguilas, and count Charles de Damas. He told me that all three of them had been put under arrest; that the two former had arrived with their detachments about half an hour after the king, but that the hussars they commanded had joined those at Varennes; he said that M. de Damas came soon afterwards, accompanied only by two or three commissioned and a few non-commissioned officers, his dragoons having refused to follow him. It now appeared to me, that the dispositions agreed upon had not been observed, and that my orders had not been executed; though I could form no idea of the reason of this neglect.

Meantime the regiment of royal Allemand arrived, and I proposed to general d'Hoffelize and the other officers to cross the river, and follow the king's carriage

three

1791.

three or four leagues, to see if we could overtake it. I sent some light horse both above and below the town, to examine where the river was fordable, and though there certainly were places where it might be passed, yet they could not be found. I saw many national guards under arms in Varènnes, and we were now informed that the garrisons of Metz and Verdun were in full march towards that town with their cannon: the troops which composed the latter, indeed, were already at no great distance; the national guards throughout the whole country were in motion, and now all seemed lost: even the cavalry under my command expressed a reluctance to proceed any farther. I determined then to lead the regiment of royal Allemand back to Stenay, and having disposed of it in the town, the municipality being assembled for the purpose of issuing an order for my arrest, I set out for Luxembourg accompanied by all the general and many of the inferior officers. On the frontier, instructions had

had already been given to prevent us from passing; we however forced our way, though saluted with some musket shot. 1791.

The particulars of this event are fully detailed in a *procès verbal* which I caused to be drawn up by the officers of the hussars who were at Varènnes, when the king was discovered: M. Bertrand de Moleville likewise, to whom I have communicated it, has inserted this *procès verbal* in his Private Memoirs lately published, so that to repeat it here would, I think, be useless.

Since my departure from France, I have learned from M. de Damas and other persons worthy of credit, that the king left the Thuilleries about midnight in a common coach; that madame Elizabeth and madame Royale, who arrived first, saw La Fayette pass across the Carrouzel, where the carriage destined for the king was waiting; that at the moment the queen

1791. queen and dauphin, who followed the king, arrived, La Fayette was seen to pass a second time; he seems to have had suspicions, but not to have known any thing certain. I could never discover the reason why no couriers preceded the king's carriage, as he had three *gardes du corps* disguised as domestics, two of whom were constantly seated on the coach-box. The harness of his majesty's coach breaking near Montmirel, occasioned a delay of two hours. At several places on the road his majesty shewed himself, particularly at Châlons, where he was recognised by the post-master, who being an honest man kept silence. On his arrival at Pont du Somvele, the king found no detachment there, M. de N * * * and M. de Goguilas having withdrawn it about half an hour before; the reason assigned for this conduct by the former (for I have never since seen M. de Goguilas) was, that as there had a few days before been an insurrection of the people in this place, the presence of the hussars had given them

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uneasiness;

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uneasiness; and further, thinking the time elapsed at which the king should pass, they had thought it prudent to retire and return to Varennes. But he never explained to me his motives for informing the detachments at Clermont and St. Menchoud, that the king was no longer to be expected, or for taking an indirect road with his detachment to Varennes, which was the occasion of his not reaching that place till after the king's arrival there. Why did he not leave part of his troops upon the road to stop any couriers who might be passing that way? Why, on his arrival at Varennes, did he suffer himself to be known by the national guards, and deliver his detachment into their hands, instead of attacking and dispersing both them and the people who detained the king, at that time few in number? Lastly, why did he not instantly apprise me of the event?

But to return to what personally concerns the king. At St. Menchoud he exposed

1791. posed himself much to view, and was recognised by the post-master, who dared not take any measures then to stop him, the horses being already put to the carriage and just setting off; but he dispatched his son to Varennes for the purpose of informing the municipality that the king was coming that way: at St. Menéhou he was known too by the commander of the detachment placed there, who gave orders to his troop to mount their horses; but the national guards having likewise learned what was going forward, placed a detachment before the door of the stables, from whence they would not suffer them to take their horses. The only person who gained possession of his horse and escaped, was a *maréchal de Logis*, who discovering the post-master's son, the too famous Drouet, as he was setting off for Varennes, followed him some hours with the intention either to stop or kill him; but lost sight of him in a wood, and did not reach Varennes till long after him.

At

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At Clermont, count Charles de Damas knowing the king, ordered his two squadrons to mount; but this order was countermanded by one from the municipality, which the soldiers obeyed, and M. de Damas with three others set off for Varennes, where they arrived after the king's arrest. His majesty reached the last-mentioned town about half past eleven at night: astonished at having never seen either M. de N * * * or M. de Goguilas, and at not finding the horses of the former, which were to serve him as a relay, he stopped at the entrance of the town. The *gardes du corps* who were upon the box of the carriage, went from gate to gate inquiring after the relay, which M. de Goguilas had placed at the other extremity of the town: the queen herself alighted to gain information concerning it: at last, after many promises and intreaties, the postillion was persuaded to go onwards. The carriage was first stopped under an arch only by eight or nine ruffians, whom the *gardes du corps* were going

1791. going to oppose, but were forbid by the king: his majesty was then conducted into a neighbouring house, where he was immediately known; the municipal officers came to the spot, the tocsin was sounded, the national guards collected, as well from the place, as from the whole country round. The king conversed with the mayor and municipal officers with great condescension and some firmness: he assured them that he had no intention to leave the kingdom; but only to go to Montmedi, there to be with his troops in hopes of enjoying quiet and liberty; and concluded by requesting they would permit him to continue his journey: this they declined, though in a respectful manner, telling him they were obliged to wait the orders of the assembly. The major part of them expressed regard for him, and some even sympathy, either real or pretended.

In the meantime couriers were dispatched to Metz, Verdun, and all the large

large garrison towns, announcing the event of his majesty's flight, and informing them that I was marching with troops to his rescue. The commander of the squadron of hussars at Varennes, a young man, being not yet acquainted by M. de Goguilas with the object for which he was stationed there, thought he was only intended to escort a sum of money; in consequence, he had not assembled his troop: his hussars were mingled with the people, and when he ordered them to form themselves, they refused to obey. The two officers whom I had sent to Varennes had, according to orders, remained close within the inn where the king's horses were, waiting for M. de Goguilas, and ignorant of what was passing in the town.

About three quarters of an hour after the king's arrest, M. de Goguilas and M. de N * * * reached Varennes, and were recognised by the national guards, who obliged their detachment to dismount, before they would permit them to enter the town.

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They now demanded to be admitted to the king, which was granted. His majesty told them to remain quiet, and make no attempt to rescue him from his situation by force; he observed, that I should have time to come to his assistance; besides, added he, from the manner in which the principal members of the municipality have spoken to me, I have reason to believe that I shall be suffered to continue my journey. Indeed, for a few moments, these men seemed undetermined; and the king still had his doubts, whether they would wait for instructions from Paris. M. de Goguilas then went out, and addressing himself to the hussars, asked them, "whom they were for?" upon which, they cried out unanimously, "The nation; for that we are, and ever will be." Immediately, one of the national guards placed himself at the head of these hussars, and the commander of them having joined the two officers whom I had sent to Varennes, came to inform me of what had happened. The latter two gentlemen had never been able

to come near the person of the king, having been fired on in the attempt. About seven in the morning, an aide-de-camp arrived from M. de la Fayette, bringing an order to the municipality, by which they were enjoined to send the king back to Paris. On M. Deslong's again demanding his majesty's orders, he a second time replied, "I am a prisoner, consequently incapable of giving any."

Such are the circumstances I have been able to collect of this melancholy affair, of the success of which, as may have been seen, I never entertained the least hopes. I think it necessary to add, that at the time it was undertaken both people and troops were enraged even to madness against the sovereign; at Metz, and Verdun in particular, this disposition was evident. When marching from the former of these places for Varennes, the cannoneers told their officers, whom they had compelled to follow them, that the first discharge should be at

1791. the king's carriage, and the second at them, if they did not perform their duty.

On my arrival at Luxembourg I was kindly received. Here I remained some time, but was surprised to find that the emperor had ordered no troops into this quarter. In Luxembourg itself, though a place of such importance, there were not more than three thousand men, and those recruits and invalids, nor were there any other troops in the neighbourhood. I was, indeed, informed, that the government of the Low Countries had received an order from the emperor, to supply the king with whatever forces he should require, and to furnish him with such sums as he should want, from the Imperial military chest.

I now learned that Monsieur, the king's brother, and Madame, were arrived at Brussels. This circumstance afforded me great satisfaction, as I had been much alarmed on their account. They were to leave

leave the Thuilleries an hour after the king, and proposed taking the route of Flanders, without having adopted any extraordinary precautions to secure their safety on the road. 1791.

When I reached Luxembourg, forcibly struck with the perilous situation of the king and royal family, and even apprehensive for their lives, I thought it my duty to write a letter to the national assembly, in which I accused myself as the person who had persuaded his majesty into the measures he had adopted, telling them it was in compliance with my earnest solicitation that he had consented to quit Paris, and retire to his faithful troops upon the frontiers. I thought it right at the same time to add, that should they offer any violence to his majesty's person or liberty, or even fail in their duty and respect to him, they had every thing to fear from the vengeance of all the sovereigns in alliance with him.

This letter, which has been since printed and distributed throughout all Europe, was

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intended for no other purpose than to turn upon myself that torrent of popular fury, which I feared might prove fatal to the king and royal family. I wished, likewise, to intimidate the numerous enemies of that prince and the monarchy. For this step, however, I have been severely censured by all parties, who have imputed it to a spirit of rhodomontade, whilst I was under the influence of the emotions of fury, and vengeance: but how was it possible my motives could be so misconstrued? Had I not been actuated by a desire to save the king, and had not that been my only object, should I have been so absurd as to announce that foreign armies were upon the point of entering France, when I saw no dispositions for such a purpose? should I have uttered threats, which I knew at that time it was impossible to put in practice? should I have exposed myself not only to proscription and persecution, which I knew would extend to all that belonged to me, but likewise to the fury of my enemies; those enemies who, I was certain, would pursue me with
relentless

relentless rage, and who did, indeed, not long after, fix a price upon my head?

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But to return to my subject. About the beginning of July I learned with great satisfaction, that no apprehensions need be entertained for the lives of his majesty and the royal family; and that the duke of Orleans, at the head of the Jacobins, had been unable either to engage the assembly to pronounce the king's deposition, or to persuade them to bring him to a trial. Indeed, if they adhered to the principles of their constitution, they could neither do one nor the other. The king, it is true, was restricted by the laws from going more than twenty leagues from Paris, but in case he exceeded those limits, it was enacted, that he should be first cited to return within the prescribed bounds, and it was only on his refusal that he could be declared to have forfeited the throne. However, he had in the present instance been arrested and brought prisoner to Paris, which was a manifest violation of their own statutes; but

1791. but their conduct had hitherto been one tissue of inconsistencies, being guided in every thing by a few factious and designing men.

During my residence at Luxembourg, I received the decree pronounced by the assembly against me, and all those who were thought to have any way assisted in the king's flight. I shall insert it here, as it tends to prove that the assembly entered into my views, and that the leading members of it, such as the Lameths, Barnave, Duport, Beauharnois, at that time president, by no means wished for the total abolition of the monarchy, but, touched with compassion for their sovereign, resolved to shield him from the fury of the Jacobins, by accusing me as the author of his attempt.

DECREE of the NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.

“ The national assembly, having heard
 “ the report of the diplomatic and mili-
 “ tary committees, and of the committees
 “ of

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“ of the constitution, of research, of re-
“ ports, of revision, and of criminal ju-
“ risprudence, and found the result of
“ their inquiries to be, that the Sieur
“ Bouillé, general of the French army
“ upon the Meuse, the Sarre, and the Mo-
“ selle, has formed the design of over-
“ turning the constitution; that with this
“ view, he has endeavoured to form to
“ himself a party in the kingdom, and has
“ solicited and executed orders not counter-
“ signed as directed by law; that he has in-
“ vited the king and royal family to one
“ of the towns under his command, has
“ disposed of detachments, and marched
“ troops towards Montmedi, near which
“ town he had prepared a camp; has tried
“ to corrupt the soldiers, enticed them to
“ desert in order to join him, and has so-
“ licited foreign powers to invade the
“ French territories: decrees,

“ 1st, That there is ground of accusa-
“ tion against the Sieur Bouillé, his accom-
“ plices and adherents, and that his trial
“ shall take place before the high national
“ provisionalary

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“provisionary court, sitting at Orleans;
 “that for this purpose, the evidence produced to the national assembly shall be
 “transmitted to the officer acting as public
 “accuser to that tribunal.

“2d, That as it likewise appears from
 “the aforesaid evidence, that the Sieurs
 “Heyman, Klinglin, and d’Hoffelize,
 “marechaux de camp in the army of M.
 “de Bouillé; Défoteux, adjutant-general;
 “Bouillé, junior, major of hussars; and
 “Goguilas, aide-de-camp; Choiseuil Stainville, colonel of the first regiment of
 “dragoons; Mandel, lieutenant-colonel of
 “the Royal Allemand; de Ferson, colonel
 “of the Royal Swedes; de Valory, de
 “Malden, and des Moustier, formerly
 “*gardes du corps*; are accused of being
 “privy to the plot, and having favoured
 “the designs of the Sieur Bouillé; the
 “national assembly decrees, that there is
 “ground for accusation against them, and
 “that they shall be arraigned before the
 “high national provisional court.

“3d,

3d, The national assembly orders, that
the persons mentioned in the preceding
articles, who are or may be hereafter
arrested, be conveyed under a good and
secure guard to the prisons of Orleans;
and that the proceedings begun before
the tribunal of the first *arrondissement* of
Paris, or before any other tribunal, be
sent, together with the accused, to the
same town, the tribunal of which is
alone charged with the investigation of
this affair.

4th, The national assembly decrees,
that the Sieurs Damas, Dandouin, Val-
court, Morassin, Talon, Floriac, and
Rémy; the Sieurs Larour, lieutenant in
the first regiment of dragoons; Pahoudy,
sub-lieutenant in the Swiss regiment of
Castella; Brige, equerry to the king; and
madame Tourzel; remain in a state of
arrest till the informations be taken,
on which their lot is to be deter-
mined.

5th,

1791. " 5th, The ladies Brunier and Neuville
 " are ordered to be set at liberty."

Together with this decree, I received a letter from M. le V^e de Beauharnois. It was without any signature: but I have since received unequivocal proofs that it was written by that gentleman, who was a member of the national assembly, and president at the time of the king's arrest, and who afterwards, in 1793, commanded the French army on the Upper Rhine, against the duke of Brunswick. This letter, which I think it incumbent on me to insert, will shew that he clearly entered into the motives which led me to write to the assembly; and whilst it serves to justify my conduct in that affair, it affords information of some very interesting particulars, which display the opinion entertained by the principal members of the majority of the assembly at the time of writing.

" Paris, July 16, 1791.

" I am a Frenchman, Sir, known to
 " you, but of the opposite party. Before

" I enter on the subject of this letter, I will
" frankly tell you what I think of you,
" that you may see what kind of a man
" you have to deal with. This is all you
" shall know of me.

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" I have ever esteemed you ; and your
" conduct in a recent affair has made no
" change in my sentiments. I know you
" to possess great talents, great courage,
" and, whatever your enemies may say to
" the contrary, great rectitude and inte-
" grity. You were no friend to a revolu-
" tion so extensive. I am of a different
" manner of thinking, and with the ex-
" ception of three or four great changes,
" which you may guess, I love every part
" of our constitution.

" As long as you imagined, that from a
" greater or less degree of connection be-
" tween the king and assembly, some settled
" order of things might result, you served
" the constitution, though you did not ad-
" mire it ; but when you thought you saw
" the

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“ the assembly under the dominion of a
 “ faction, and hurried beyond the limits of
 “ the constitution itself had made; when
 “ the very partisans of the assembly refused
 “ to acknowledge the authorities it had
 “ created, and the king and royal family
 “ were insulted, and treated as prisoners by
 “ the people*; lastly, when La Fayette
 “ was obliged to give in his resignation,
 “ because at the peril of his life he had en-
 “ deavoured, without success, to enforce
 “ obedience to the laws: when you were
 “ witness to these enormities, you imagined
 “ that we were operating our own ruin;
 “ that France was on the brink of destruc-
 “ tion, and that some signal blow must be
 “ struck to save her. You made the at-
 “ tempt, and have failed; and now, after
 “ having taken a step with respect to the
 “ assembly, which I am far from approv-
 “ ing, but which you thought necessary
 “ to the personal safety of the king and
 “ queen, you are endeavouring to form to

* Alluding to the 18th of April, when the people
 by force prevented the king from going to St. Cloud.

“ yourself

" yourself a party, for the purpose of mak-
" ing some attempt upon France, which, 1791.
" should you succeed, might rally round
" you a still greater number of malcontents;
" and with these, assisted perhaps by some
" foreign powers, you propose to effect by
" force great and permanent changes in
" our constitution.

" I mean to offer to your consideration
" a few reflections on the means to which
" you have recourse for the attainment of
" an object which you consider laudable:
" let me beg of you to give them atten-
" tion; they may, perhaps, be found not
" unworthy of it. I will first remind you
" of our past condition, and shall then
" proceed to speak of what we now are.

" The national assembly, frequently in-
" fluenced in its conduct by factious men,
" whose names will ever be held in abhor-
" rence by all good Frenchmen, has for
" two years been labouring to form the
" constitution which is now nearly com-
" pleted.

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“ pleted. These factions men had constant-
“ ly a great number of followers com-
“ posed of the ignorant and the cowardly :
“ the ill-conducted opposition which they
“ met with from the right side of the as-
“ sembly only irritated the public mind,
“ consequently had no other effect than to
“ serve their infamous projects: the rest of
“ the patriotic side of the assembly might
“ be divided into two classes of men, those
“ who, acting without energy or any fixed
“ principle, were ever ready to adopt the
“ opinion of him who was most clamor-
“ ous; and those enlightened men who,
“ disinterested in their views, and steadfast
“ in their principles, beheld with grief the
“ most courageous and unremitted efforts
“ sometimes useless; yet, cherishing li-
“ berty as much as they detested faction,
“ steadily pursued their object, the consti-
“ tution, notwithstanding the obstacles
“ they met with from their designing ene-
“ mies. No one so much as Mirabeau
“ contributed to strip these factions of their
“ popularity. His death, which I consider

“ as

“ as a great national misfortune, and
“ which you more than any other have
“ reason to lament, served however to
“ hasten their disgrace. Their infernal
“ machinations, though they fixed an eter-
“ nal stain upon the revolution, and had
“ nearly involved France in ruin, yet were
“ attended with no advantage to themselves;
“ their detestable intrigues were constantly
“ counteracted, particularly on the 5th of
“ October 1789, and they saw nothing
“ before them but death and ignominy.
“ Having long seen that the nation was
“ verging towards destruction, they con-
“ cluded that they should be involved in
“ its ruin; this led them to change their
“ plan of conduct; the anarchy and dis-
“ order which they had excited to distract
“ their unhappy country, had long been
“ prepared by men of whom they had con-
“ stantly been considered the leaders; these
“ they now abandoned, and accused them
“ as the authors of the misfortunes which
“ had happened to France. The king’s
“ departure from Paris followed: for the
“ purpose

1791. " purpose of re-establishing their credit, at
 " that time annihilated, they availed them-
 " selves of that disposition to union which
 " is ever produced in a party by the appre-
 " hension of any common danger; and
 " now they are reckoned in the number of
 " those whomost ardently desire to see order
 " restored, and the executive power rein-
 " stated. This does not render them more
 " estimable characters, but to save our
 " country every expedient must be tried;
 " true patriots do not refuse their assistance,
 " though at the same time they detest and
 " despise the individual they support.

" Let us now turn to the present moment,
 " and examine the conduct which the
 " national assembly pursues, and will
 " pursue. Within six weeks of the termi-
 " nation of its labours, it has unanimously
 " resolved, (with the exception of five or
 " six extravagant members,) at the revision
 " of the constitution, to make such further
 " changes as are wished for by all good
 " citizens; it is then to be proposed for

“ the king’s acceptance, after having de- 1791.
 “ fired him to repair to what place he
 “ pleases, in order to act with perfect liberty. }

“ A federation for the month of August
 “ was proposed, and the object of it was
 “ to excite in the king’s favour a move-
 “ ment which might again attach him to
 “ the constitution. There is reason to be-
 “ lieve that this measure will still be put in
 “ execution. This conduct, adopted by
 “ the assembly towards both the king and
 “ the nation, (their interest being I believe
 “ the same,) is in my opinion extremely
 “ prudent, particularly at this juncture,
 “ when they must carefully avoid too open-
 “ ly thwarting the spirit of the provinces,
 “ which are yet much enraged against the
 “ king, though there is no doubt but his
 “ presence when he visits them will quick-
 “ ly reconcile them.

“ Having once accepted the constitution,
 “ the king can then visit the different
 “ parts of France, reinstate himself in the
 “ affections

1791. "affections of his people, and at his re-
"turn to Versailles or Paris he may re-
"sume that liberty and splendour of
"which he ought never to have been di-
"vested,
"From this new and happy revolution
"will result the return of all our fugitive
"countrymen, the mutual oblivion of
"what is past, and that sincere and cordial
"reconciliation which the sensibility of the
"French nation (by no means extinguished
"as some may imagine) impatiently looks
"for. In short, disorder, cruelty, and
"misfortune will give place to harmony,
"happiness, and peace. With what rap-
"ture do I survey the prospect! Who are
"the enemies we shall have then to fear?
"It may be found necessary to make
"yet greater changes, but we will leave
"them to time and the constitution itself;
"we shall not fail soon to perceive what
"is still deficient. No person is ignorant
"that when a people has burst asunder its
"chains,

“ chains, and formed for itself a constitu- 1791.
 “ tion, still terrified at the despotism from
 “ which it has just escaped, it leaves the
 “ object of its apprehensions destitute of
 “ every species of authority; but soon dis-
 “ gusted with anarchy, it has restored to
 “ the executive power that degree of au-
 “ thority which enables it to secure the li-
 “ berty and happiness of the community.
 “ The recent instance of America is a
 “ proof of the justness of my assertion.

“ Let us now examine the means I ima-
 “ gine you intend to adopt for the purpose
 “ of re-establishing in this country the or-
 “ der of things which you prefer. These
 “ means are force.

“ I have observed in a former part of
 “ this letter, that the assembly, when no
 “ longer led by faction, was divided into
 “ two classes, one consisting of men pru-
 “ dent, brave, and enlightened, the other
 “ of the fanatic or ill-intentioned, who aim
 “ at the ruin of the state: the latter,

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“ though much superior to the former in
“ number, yet in time of danger are silent,
“ and suffer themselves to be guided by
“ them. You know that those who are
“ most insolent in prosperity are almost al-
“ ways the most abject in adversity. The
“ assembly then, at least in affairs of import-
“ ance, is well directed; the appearance
“ of danger has called back to the helm
“ those brave and virtuous citizens who
“ ought never to have quitted it; in this
“ respect then your menaces have been of
“ service to us: but should you persist in
“ putting those menaces in execution, they
“ would produce an effect exactly the re-
“ verse of what you desire, which I believe
“ to be the happiness of the king, on whom
“ at this time I am firmly persuaded de-
“ pends that of the nation. It will not be
“ difficult to convince you of the truth of
“ what I here advance.

“ You must have seen from the events
“ which have lately taken place, the conse-
“ quence which would follow, should any
“ attempt

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“ attempt at this time be made from with-
“ out upon France; it would be the means
“ of rallying the people throughout every
“ part of the kingdom, of throwing more
“ power than ever into the hands of the
“ national assembly, and augmenting the
“ resentment against the king. Those
“ brave and well-intentioned men, who at
“ this time direct the assembly, would then
“ think themselves bound in honour to
“ support the existing constitution, and
“ would be afraid to attempt those changes
“ which they desire, lest they should be
“ accused of weakness and pusillanimity:
“ you would thus compel them to quit the
“ circle in which they wish to move, and
“ unite themselves to a set of factious
“ men, whom they detest equally with
“ yourself, and whom they are now on
“ the point of crushing.

“ But I will suppose, that notwithstand-
“ ing this union you should finally be
“ conqueror; still you are certain that
“ victory must be purchased with torrents
“ of

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“ of blood, while in the interim their
“ majesties may be exposed to the greatest
“ danger; perhaps even fall by the hand
“ of some assassins in the pay of those
“ foreign powers who have long had their
“ agents amongst us.

“ I will again suppose (which perhaps
“ you think, though I am of a different
“ opinion) that this unanimity which
“ appears to prevail throughout all
“ France is only the effect of a mo-
“ mentary fermentation, and not founded
“ upon any lasting principle; still you
“ must be persuaded that it would be
“ for your interest to defer the attempts
“ I imagine you to be meditating against
“ France, till the approaching spring;
“ when, the present effervescence of the
“ public mind being once passed, it will
“ be more easy to execute your projects;
“ while in the meantime you will see
“ what turn our affairs take; and that
“ you will act prudently in determining
“ upon nothing till that period.

“ A step

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“ A step like this from a man who con-
“ ceals his name will doubtless cause you
“ no small surprise, and you will endea-
“ vour to find out the motive which led
“ to it. In times like these, I can easily
“ conceive that distrust is your prevailing
“ sentiment, consequently that this letter
“ will excite suspicions in your mind; but
“ to remove these I appeal to yourself.
“ Reflect well, and see if it be possible I
“ can be actuated by other motives than
“ my country's welfare, which I call
“ Heaven to witness I have ever endea-
“ voured to promote; my attachment to
“ my sovereign, whose misfortunes none
“ more sincerely compassionate than my-
“ self; and the personal esteem which I
“ entertain for you: be assured that per-
“ sonal fear has no part in what I am
“ now doing; such a sentiment never
“ entered my mind, and should you at
“ the head of an army enter France,
“ much as I esteem you, I should be
“ one of the first and most ardent to
“ oppose you,

“ May

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" May the considerations which I have
" now laid before you prove conform-
" able to your own manner of thinking!
" This is my most fervent wish,

" P. S. What I have said is only the
" result of my own reflections; but as
" my situation enables me to become
" acquainted with the sentiments of those
" estimable characters who at this time
" govern the assembly, I can venture to
" assure you that these are exactly con-
" formable to my own. This letter I
" have enclosed under cover, addressed
" to persons who, I hope, will carefully
" deliver it. I have likewise sent a du-
" plicate of it by a different rout, in
" order to be perfectly assured it comes
" safe to hand. If you wish me to con-
" tinue to inform you from time to time
" of what is going forward among us,
" and of the state of public opinion
" which has at present the greatest sway,
" this information I will give you with
" truth and impartiality; and should
" what

" what you learn from me have any 1791.
" influence over the conduct you may
" pursue, I shall believe I have rendered
" a great service both to my country and
" yourself; this is the only reward I expect, and I shall think it a very considerable one.

" You may in the following manner
" let me know that my letter is received,
" and that you wish again to hear from
" me; write to the editors of the *Journal*
" *de la Cour et de la Ville*, which is entirely devoted to your party, informing
" them that you wish as soon as possible
" to have inserted in their publication the
" following article: ' M. de B * * * has
" received the letter addressed to him on
" the 10th of July 1791, and wishes the
" continuance of that correspondence.'
" coming from you, such a request will
" be instantly complied with."

I carefully followed the instructions given me, but never received a second letter from M. Beauharnois.

CHAP. XII.

General emigration.—I offer my services to the empress of Russia.—Letter of the king of Sweden.—I visit that monarch at Aix la Chapelle.—His project in favour of the king of France.—Interview of the emperor and the king of Prussia.—Declaration of Pilnitz.—Plans of the emperor and king of Prussia for terminating the affairs of France.

1791.

AFTER the king's arrest at Varennes, the emigration, which had hitherto been inconsiderable among the members of the first orders of the state, became now general; it even extended to the respectable part of the citizens, who were alarmed at the licentious conduct of the people. Within the space of a few months after I had left the kingdom, almost all the officers of the army quitted their colours, and came to join

join the French princes at Coblenz, to which place they had retired. The nobility of the provinces, the major part followed by their wives and children, sought in foreign lands an asylum, abandoning a country where the cry of proscription daily resounded in their ears. The clergy almost in a mass, and with them the chief members of the magistracy of France, sought abroad for a refuge from persecution. The grandees of the kingdom had for the most part long since quitted it. Nobility, riches, even virtue itself was a crime in the eyes of the people. Every road in France was covered with men, women, and children, who, fearing to be buried under the ruins of the tottering monarchy, were abandoning a country which was soon to afford them nothing but a tomb.

Here let me be permitted to cite a passage from Tacitus, which presents a faithful picture of that horrible scene of crimes, murders, and wickedness,

1791.

which long disgraced France in the eyes of all Europe. *Corrupti in dominos servi, in patronos liberti: et quibus deerat inimicus per amicos oppressi.* Children in France were seen to become the accusers of their fathers; and wives, having first betrayed their husbands, flew to the arms of their enemies: friend denounced friend, and the domestic, grown grey in the service of his master, delivered him into the hands of the executioner. Yet, amid this general depravity, instances of virtue were not wanting*. Mothers accompanied their children into exile, and wives their husbands; children resolved to follow the lot of their fathers; and the generous kinsman, the sincere friend, the faithful servant, now displayed a constancy which

* “Non tamen adeo virtutum sterile sæculum ut non et bona exempla prodiderit. Comitæ pro-
“fugos liberos matres, secutæ maritos in exilia con-
“juges, propinqui audentes, constantes generi, con-
“tumax etiam adversus tormenta servorum fides.
“Supremæ clarorum virorum necessitates, ipsa neces-
“sitas fortiter tolerata, et laudatis antiquorum
“mortibus pares exitus.” *Tacit. Annal.*

shewed

shewed that persecution did but add to their attachment. Characters the most illustrious were seen struggling with extreme want, and supporting misfortune with dignity and courage; whilst men distinguished for their rank and talents, nay even their wives, bravely encountered death, and met it with calmness.

1791.

Meantime I saw nothing which denoted any hostile preparations against France by foreign powers: the emperor had not even yet concluded a peace with the Turks; hostilities, it is true, had ceased, but it was then impossible to foresee that union which afterwards took place between the courts of Vienna and Berlin, for the purpose of terminating the disorders by which France was distracted; an union as extraordinary as their disunion, a few years afterwards.

In the month of May preceding, I had requested permission of the king to enter into the service of Russia, in case he
c c should

1791.

should lay aside his project of quitting Paris, and retiring to one of the towns under my command. This I obtained, and I now sent the young Sombreuil (since unfortunately killed at Quiberon) with my proposals to the empress; being determined to return no more to my country, where I could expect to find nothing but that confusion and anarchy with which for two years and upwards I had been surrounded. Whatever change things might undergo, these disorders, I doubted not, would survive me; for I concluded, that even should foreign armies succeed in restoring to the king his liberty and power, after having seized one part of the frontier, (a dreadful expedient, but which I then thought necessary,) still there would remain insurmountable obstacles to the re-establishment and maintenance of public order: the principal of these were the opinions which prevailed both among the people and soldiers; the strength of the parties which were spread over all France; the weakness of the royalists

within

within the kingdom, and the extravagances of those without; and the difficulty of giving the king a sufficient force to support his authority. In the beginning of July, the king of Sweden, then at Aix-la-Chapelle, wrote me the following letter: I had previously sent him that which I addressed to the national assembly:

1791.

“ Aix-la-Chapelle, July 3, 1791.

“ Monsieur le marquis de Bouillé, I
“ return you many thanks for the proof
“ of confidence which you have given
“ in favouring me with your letter to
“ the national assembly. I find it filled
“ with those sentiments of attachment
“ to your sovereign, and detestation of
“ anarchy, which are worthy a soldier
“ like you. In civil commotions, as in
“ war, fortune is blind; but the prin-
“ ciples of honour and fidelity ever re-
“ main the same, and glory is attached
“ to them, rather than to success. Your
“ reputation, which has long been esta-
“ blished as a warrior, is enhanced by
“ your

1791. " your stedfast and inviolable attachment
 " to your virtuous, but unhappy fove-
 " reign. Accept my compliments on the
 " occasion. There is no king in Europe
 " who would not place a high value on
 " the acquisition of a man like you for
 " a subject, and rejoice to see him at the
 " head of his armies. Perhaps the oldest
 " and most faithful ally of your country
 " may have a preferable claim to all
 " others, especially as by entering into
 " his service, you would not abandon
 " that of your real country; but what-
 " ever your situation, be assured that you
 " will ever have my esteem, and I shall
 " be ever solicitous for your welfare.
 " Adieu, M. de Bouillé; may the Al-
 " mighty keep you under his holy pro-
 " tection.

" GUSTAVUS."

The letter of this prince, for whom I
 entertained the highest esteem, determined
 me to visit him at Aix-la-Chapelle. In
 the interview which I had there with him,

he

he explained to me the reasons which had prevented him from taking me into his service at the beginning of the year 1789; I think it my duty to suppress them. He assured me, that his principal object in quitting his dominions, and approaching the French territory, was to see if he could be of use to his majesty; and that he had been led to take this step by the persuasion of the empress of Russia, who had represented to him, that as he was acquainted with the nature of revolutions, having happily terminated that which was begun in his own kingdom, he might afford the king of France some assistance in his embarrassed situation, might point out to him the means of emerging from it, and thus save the monarchy from total destruction. His Swedish majesty added, that he had been apprised of the intention of Louis the Sixteenth to retire to Montmedi, and expected to join him at that place.

I had no difficulty in explaining to this prince the state of France, and in prov-

1791. ing to him, that it was disguised in the eyes of all the parties by the passions which agitated them, and principally in those of the royalists, who were blinded by the desire of revenge. I told him, and endeavoured to convince him of the justness of my opinion, that, considering the number and strength of the enemies to royalty, (the Jacobins bidding fair to be quickly masters of France,) no resource remained but in the intervention of the powers in alliance with the king of France, supported by powerful armies, who might either bring about an accommodation, by sustaining the moderate and constitutional royalists against the anarchists, or might effect a new revolution in favour of the king by entering France, only, however, in the character of mediators, and of protectors of the most reasonable party. I shewed him that invasion, at all times a measure of great danger, from the consequences with which it may be attended, was rendered less difficult at the present juncture, when the army, abandoned

abandoned by its leaders, and engaged in every species of licentiousness and violation of discipline, was totally disorganised, and the foreign troops in the service of the king, and great part of the cavalry who still remained faithful to him, were those alone who observed any order or military regulations; and when the major part of the frontier towns were in a very ruinous state, it appearing from a survey which by his majesty's order I had recently caused to be made of them, that the sixteen places on the first line from Switzerland to the Sambre required eight months, and an expence of eleven millions of livres, to put them in a condition to maintain a siege. I added, that if we had not a party, we had at least partisans, and even powerful ones, in the provinces, particularly those which lay on the frontier; that we kept up a correspondence with those generals, engineers, and officers of artillery who still remained in the strong towns, whilst those who had emigrated could give much information

1791. respecting whatever was necessary to be known. Certain it is, that at the end of the year 1791, and even during the whole of 1792, it was by no means difficult to invade France; one part of the frontier was in a manner open and unprotected, and independently of the particular causes by which a stop was put to the progress of the combined armies when they entered Champagne, it required all the energy, artifice, and fanaticism of the Jacobins, as well as the extraordinary abilities of the general chosen by that faction on the breaking out of the war, even to assemble, model, and employ the army, though it afterwards gained such surprising advantages.

With respect to the failure of the enterprize to which I have just alluded, I must say nothing; and I must equally observe silence upon the political errors committed by the cabinets of the allied powers in the course of the war, which were however, if possible, still exceeded
by

by the false measures their generals pursued. 1791,
These events are of too recent a date, to admit of the truth being spoken in its full extent,

But to return to the king of Sweden. That monarch invited me to enter into his service, but I represented to him that I had already made overtures to the empress of Russia, whose answer I daily expected. Upon this he opened to me the project agreed upon between himself, the last-mentioned sovereign, and the king of Spain; this was to invade France with six-and-thirty thousand Swedes or Russians, who were to be landed as near as possible to Paris, either with a view of marching straight to that capital, and creating a diversion, whilst the combined armies should penetrate in a different direction, or for the purpose of securing a respectable position by seizing one of the sea-port towns, where it was proposed to wait the issue of a negotiation with the new government of France, which was to be set on foot in the names of the empress,

1791. emprefs, himself, and the other allies of the French king: this negotiation he thought the more likely to be attended with success, as he could not possibly be supposed to entertain any views of ambition or conquest. He appeared to me certain that the kings of Spain and Sardinia would support him by marching armies to the French frontier, but seemed to rely very little on the king of Prussia, and still less on the emperor, knowing the pacific disposition of Leopold, whom nothing could engage in a war but the ambition of the cabinet of Vienna.

His Swedish majesty informed me that the combined army of the Swedes and Russians was to be commanded by himself in person, and that the court of Spain had engaged to furnish fifteen millions of livres tournois to defray the expences of the expedition, for which every thing was already prepared; he then offered me the command of the Swedish troops under him.

Pressed

1791.

Pressed by this monarch, who had imparted to me all his projects and designs, seduced too by the flattering encomiums with which he loaded me, (for who can be insensible to praise when conferred by a hero?) I consented to wave my scruples with respect to the empress, and to accept his proposal. I engaged myself then in the service of his Swedish majesty, but solely with the view of being employed in the projected expedition, which promised me an opportunity of again serving my unhappy sovereign, by uniting myself to one of his allies, least obnoxious to the suspicion of France.

I remained about a fortnight with the king of Sweden at Aix-la-Chapelle, where it was agreed that I should collect whatever information might contribute to the success of the undertaking, and at the beginning of winter should send him an exact account of what I had learned: this he was to communicate to the empress, and their plan was to be concerted accordingly, and to be put

1791. put in execution in the approaching spring, when the Baltic should be open.

Within a few days from our conference, the king of Sweden proposed returning to his dominions, for the purpose of holding a diet, and making the necessary preparations for embarking his troops. During the short time I was with this prince, he gave me marks of high confidence; he spoke to me with great candour and modesty of his war with the Russians, communicating to me the plans he had then conceived and executed: these were all bold, vast, and noble, but failed through the means employed for their execution; the fate of all great projects when they are not regulated by extensive military experience, combining all those minute circumstances, the least of which neglected may frustrate the whole scheme.

These observations I made to him, and he agreed with me in opinion; confessing that at that time he was little versed in the

art of war, and had very few experienced generals to direct him. He seemed to me to possess a strong understanding, and much acquired knowledge; and in character, closely to resemble the great Frederick his uncle. He said to me with an air of gaiety, "I am on very indifferent terms with all my royal brethren, except the king of England; but I have compelled the empress of Russia at least to esteem me." This princess had indeed given him a great mark of her confidence, in promising to furnish him with a considerable body of troops for the intended invasion of France. 1791.

He was much attached to Louis the Sixteenth; no one entered with so much interest into his unhappy circumstances; though he seemed much to doubt whether the great powers of Europe would act with energy and sincerity in his favour: he appeared to have great reliance on the influence, as well as actual assistance of the empress of Russia, though events have shewn that he

1791. he was mistaken. On my return to Luxembourg, I had the momentary satisfaction of learning, by means of the correspondents which I still preserved in France, that the king's situation was exactly the same as before his arrest at Varennes; that his recent misfortunes had even gained him some partisans among the leading men of the assembly, and had excited the sympathy of that part of the people who were least corrupt: these, however, were the least numerous, while the circumstance of his flight had increased the rage and the power of the Jacobins, and had given the duke of Orleans great credit and influence.

I received about this time a letter from one of my friends attached to the constitutional party, and intimately connected with its chiefs. He confirmed me in the opinion I before entertained; that the assembly, or rather the most prudent and enlightened part of it, wished sincerely for an accommodation, and only waited for an opportunity to enter into treaty with his majesty, and

and in some measure to recall a great part of what had been done, in order to come to some settled establishment, some reasonable form of government. He informed me likewise, which I had learned by another channel, that the majority of the revolutionist members of the assembly had seen with concern the arrest of the king at Varennes, imagining that had his majesty reached Montmedi, his residence there might have led to an arrangement. This letter displayed before me the dangers of a foreign war, of which I was not enough convinced; but which, however, I regarded as a violent measure, the last to be employed, and never without being accompanied by conciliatory proposals.

1791.

The following is a copy of the letter I have alluded to:

Paris, July 5, 1791.

"Not thinking it necessary, my general,
 "to risk falling into the hands of the
 "committee of research, merely to assure
 "you

1791. " you of my unalterable attachment, I
" have waited for an opportunity of writ-
" ing with safety. Having obtained it, I
" shall not take up your time with long
" and useless details, but, though the re-
" cital may add to your concern, I will tell
" you, that from the observations which I
" made during the king's absence, and
" from all that I have been able to learn
" in my conversation with the deputies, I
" am persuaded, that had the king once
" reached Montmedi, the present great po-
" litical crisis had, within a month, issued
" in a good constitution; and that too
" without the effusion of one single drop
" of blood.

" What were his majesty's intentions I
" was ignorant, but I knew your mode-
" ration, and it was upon that I founded
" my hopes of a certain accommodation.
" I am now far from finding things in so
" favourable a situation. If we are rightly
" informed, nothing can equal the extra-
" vagance of all that surround you; this
" extra-

1791.

“ extravagance will give birth to projects,
“ which will meet with a due resistance,
“ and more obstacles than are imagined, if
“ not from arms, at least from other causes.
“ But, supposing it possible to reduce a
“ country so extensive as France, still it
“ can only be for a short time,

“ It belongs to you alone, my general,
“ and to your probity, in the midst of the
“ most violent agitation that a man can
“ undergo, to remember that you are a
“ Frenchman. No, you will never employ
“ your courage and abilities in dismember-
“ ing or enslaving your native country.
“ This formed no part of your project
“ when you were conducting the king to
“ Montmedi; on the contrary, I am per-
“ suaded, you wished to save the nation
“ from the shame of a foreign yoke; and
“ can it be supposed, that you would now
“ contribute to impose one upon it? You,
“ my general, know what true glory is:
“ you know it is not to be obtained in that
“ path. Recollect, that amid their greatest

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“ excesses,

1791.

“ excesses, these representatives granted
“ you, what they seldom granted any,
“ their praise, their confidence; in you
“ were centered all their hopes; to you
“ they looked to save their country. I am
“ not ignorant that their extravagance had
“ rendered every good impracticable. I
“ know that they involved us in every
“ kind of calamity, and I cannot be suf-
“ fered in pronouncing their eulogium;
“ yet I dare remind you, that you are
“ the person in the empire who has least
“ to complain of the majority of the as-
“ sembly.

“ Reflect, my general, that the first
“ musket fired in the north, may, in the
“ south, occasion the massacre of all the
“ priests and nobles. Of what advantage
“ will it be to avenge them afterwards?
“ This will only be adding to the misfor-
“ tune. If I thus express my solicitude, it
“ is because I yet am of opinion that
“ things may be adjusted; it is yet time to
“ negotiate, and this is certainly the best
“ method.

“ method. Should you be inclined to
 “ make any moderate proposals, recollect
 “ me; I do not hesitate to offer my ser-
 “ vices, and I believe you would find them
 “ not altogether useless. 1791.

“ Adieu, my general; I hope you will
 “ find in my letter, a confirmation of those
 “ sentiments of esteem and respect which
 “ I shall ever entertain for you : requesting,
 “ in return, the continuance of that friend-
 “ ship with which you have hitherto ho-
 “ noured me.”

Certain it is, that the majority of the as-
 sembly were now partly convinced of their
 errors: but this change of opinion was ren-
 dered entirely useless by subsequent events,
 of which I was apprised by another of my
 correspondents.

I shall here insert his letter : it is dated
 the 26th of August 1791, and is the only
 one from him which I have preserved.

1791.

“ In a former letter, I gave you hopes
“ which I no longer entertain. This fatal
“ constitution, which was to have been
“ revised and amended, will remain un-
“ touched: it will continue what it is, a
“ code of anarchy, a source of calamities:
“ our unlucky planet so orders it, that at
“ the time the democrats themselves seem
“ to feel some compunction for their
“ crimes, the aristocrats, by refusing them
“ their support, oppose an obstacle to the
“ reparation they are willing to make. To
“ explain this more clearly, and to justify
“ myself in your eyes for having perhaps
“ raised in you false expectations, it is ne-
“ cessary to take things a little farther back,
“ and to tell you all that has passed; this I
“ can do, as I have to-day an opportunity
“ of writing to you by a safe conveyance.

“ The day of the king's departure, and
“ the following day, both sides of the as-
“ sembly remained watching each other's
“ motions. The popular party was con-
“ founded, while the royalists expressed
“ great

" great uneasiness; the least act of impru- 1791.
 " dence might have awakened the fury of
 " the people; all the members of the right
 " side preserved silence; and those on the
 " opposite, left it to their leaders to propose
 " what they called measures of safety,
 " which met with no opposition.

" The second day of the king's absence,
 " the Jacobins began to throw out threats,
 " while the constitutionalists were mode-
 " rate; the latter were then, and still are,
 " much more numerous than the former,
 " and they now talked of an accommoda-
 " tion, and a deputation to the king: two
 " of their party proposed to M. Malouet*
 " a conference, which was to have been
 " opened the following day, had not the
 " news of the king's arrest put a stop to
 " it. However, this disposition being now

* In my Memoirs I avoid naming any person to
 whom it can in the least be offensive; but as the greater
 part of these particulars are to be met with in the
 letters of M. Malouet, which were printed at Paris in
 1792, I do not hesitate to give his name.

1791.

“ manifest, they saw themselves separated
“ farther than ever from the *enragés*.
“ Barnave at this time returned; the re-
“ spect he had shewn the king and queen,
“ while the brutal Petion did but insult
“ their misfortune, had procured him
“ many marks of gratitude from their ma-
“ jesties, which seemed to have changed
“ the heart of that young man, till then
“ apparently devoid of sensibility. Bar-
“ nave, as you know, possesses the greatest
“ abilities, and the most extensive influ-
“ ence of any of his party, and he gained
“ over four-fifths of the left side of the
“ assembly, not only to protect the king
“ from the fury of the Jacobins, but to
“ restore to him part of his authority, at
“ the same time furnishing him with the
“ means of defending himself for the fu-
“ ture, without exceeding the bounds pre-
“ scribed by the constitution. The latter
“ part of Barnave’s plan was only imparted
“ to the chiefs of the constitutionalists, the
“ Lameths, Duport, &c; the great body
“ of that party was still so unmanageable,
“ that

“ that those who favoured this project 1791.
“ could not depend on having a majority
“ in the assembly, unless they were assisted
“ by the members on the right side: the
“ support of these, however, they ima-
“ gined themselves certain of securing,
“ when they should, in the revision of the
“ constitution, give a greater extent to the
“ royal authority.

“ Such was the state of things when I
“ last wrote to you: but convinced, as I
“ was, of the blunders of the aristocrats,
“ and of their continual mistakes, I never
“ imagined they could go so far as they
“ have since done. As soon as the news
“ reached Paris that the king was stopped
“ at Varennes, the members of the right
“ side who were in the secret committees
“ refused any longer to vote, or to take
“ any part in the deliberations and discus-
“ sions of the assembly: Malouet was not
“ of this opinion; he represented to them,
“ that whilst the session lasted, and they as-
“ sisted at it, they were under an obligation

D D 4

“ actively

1791.

“ actively to oppose any measures that
“ tended to affect the public order, or the
“ fundamental principles of the monarchy.
“ All his arguments were vain; they per-
“ sisted in their resolution, and secretly
“ drew up a protest against all that was
“ done: he, however, declared that he
“ would continue to protest to the tribune,
“ and would openly use his best endeavours
“ to prevent any mischief; he afterwards
“ told me, that he could gain over to his
“ opinion not more than from thirty to
“ forty of the members of the right side,
“ and I very much fear that this false step
“ of the most zealous part of the royalists
“ may be attended with dangerous conse-
“ quences. At that time, the disposition
“ of the assembly was in general so favour-
“ able to the king, that while he was on
“ his return to Paris, Thouret having
“ ascended the tribune, to propose the
“ decree which was to determine the
“ manner in which the king should
“ be kept, the most profound silence
“ reigned in the hall, and in the galleries;
“ almost

“ almost all the members, even on the left
“ hand, appeared confounded on hearing
“ this fatal decree read; nobody, however,
“ opposing it, the president was going to
“ put the motion, when M. Malouet rose,
“ and with an air of indignation, ex-
“ claimed, ‘ What, gentlemen, are you
“ going to do? After having arrested the
“ king, it is proposed to you to declare
“ him a prisoner: do you see the conse-
“ quence of such a step? Reflect; will
“ you make your sovereign a prisoner?’
“ ‘No, No,’ cried out several members on
“ the left side, rising tumultuously, ‘ we do
“ not mean that the king should be made
“ a prisoner;’ and the decree was on the
“ point of being rejected almost unani-
“ mously; when Thouret hastily replied,
“ ‘ The speaker has misconceived both the
“ terms and the object of the decree; we
“ have no more intention than himself to
“ imprison the king; the present measure
“ is proposed for the safety of his majesty
“ and the royal family:’ and it was not till
“ after this explanation that the decree
“ passed,

1791.

1791.

“ passed, though the imprisonment was not
“ the less real, and is still shamelessly con-
“ tinued.

“ Towards the latter end of July, the
“ constitutionalists, who suspected, but
“ were not certain, that the members of
“ the right side had drawn up a protest,
“ pursued at leisure their plan of revision,
“ more afraid than ever of the Jacobins
“ and aristocrats. Malouet, repairing to
“ the committee of revision, spoke to them
“ at first, as to men fully acquainted with
“ the vices and dangers of their constitu-
“ tion ; but he found them less disposed to
“ make any considerable changes in it,
“ being fearful they should by that means
“ lose their popularity: Target and Du-
“ port even undertook to defend their
“ work.

“ The following day, he met Chapelier
“ and Barnave, who at first disdainfully
“ refused to make any reply to his chal-
“ lenges; at last, however, they consented
“ to

“ to a plan of attack, of which all the
“ risk was to fall on himself: his proposa 1791.
“ was, to discuss in the sitting of the
“ eighth the principal points of the con-
“ stitutional act, and to demonstrate all its
“ vices and defects: ‘ You, gentlemen,’
“ said he to them, ‘ answer me: give full
“ scope to your indignation against me,
“ refute my attacks upon those articles
“ which are least dangerous, nay, even
“ upon the majority of those points which
“ I shall pronounce exceptionable; and
“ with respect to those which I shall stig-
“ matize as antimonarchical, as tending to
“ obstruct the operations of government,
“ tell me, that neither the assembly nor
“ the committee stood in need of my ob-
“ servations; that it was your intention to
“ propose several alterations in them, and
“ immediately make a motion to that effect:
“ this is, perhaps, our only way to pre-
“ serve the monarchy, and in time to give
“ it that support of which it stands in need.’
“ The above plan was agreed upon; but
“ the protest of the members of the right
“ side

1791.

“ side becoming known, and their resolu-
“ tion to vote no more depriving the
“ constitutionalists of all hopes of success
“ in their proposed revision, which the
“ Jacobins opposed with all their might,
“ they dropped the idea of it. Malouet,
“ however, who had no regular communi-
“ cation with the members of this party,
“ proceeded to the concerted attack; he
“ solemnly denounced the constitutional
“ act as antimonarchical, and not reducible
“ to practice. Already had the reasons
“ with which he supported his opinion on
“ several points made a great impression,
“ when Chapelier, who imagined that no-
“ thing was to be expected from their pro-
“ ject, interrupted his speech, and crying
“ out, ‘ Blasphemy!’ demanded that the
“ orator should be compelled to leave the
“ tribune, which was ordered. The fol-
“ lowing day, Chapelier acknowledged that
“ he had acted wrong, but he said, that all
“ his hopes of success vanished the moment
“ he heard no assistance was to be expected
“ from the right side of the assembly.

" It was absolutely necessary to give 1791.
" you this long account, lest you should
" lose all confidence in my prognostics,
" which are at present of the most
" gloomy sort: the evil is extreme, and
" I see neither within nor without the
" only remedy which can be applied to
" it, that is, force and reason united."

This letter, and other particulars which I learned at the same time, shewed me plainly the situation of France, dangerous in the extreme, if not desperate. Aristocrats, Constitutionalists, and Jacobins, all agreed upon one point, which completed the miseries of the kingdom: equally weary and disheartened, and enraged against each other, they unanimously consented to dissolve themselves after the acceptance of the constitution, that monstrous composition, whose vices the majority of the assembly well knew, yet, like the poisoned robe of Nessus, transmitted it to their successors.

Very

1791.

Very little hopes then remained, that reason would be sufficient to bring back the French to a good government; on the contrary, it required no great discernment to foresee that the reign of anarchy and Jacobinism was fast approaching; and that force alone could avert from the kingdom, calamities still greater than those it had already experienced. This opinion of mine has been but too well verified by the events which succeeded till the death of Robespierre; but though from pacific measures little was to be expected, yet a door to negotiation, I thought, should always be left open, at the same time seriously preparing for war. This was the principle which I adopted, and so did many other Frenchmen, who embraced it as their natural defence; it likewise afforded all those who loved their country an opportunity of still serving it. The 10th of August 1792, the 2d and 3d of September in the same year, and the tyranny of Robespierre, prove the truth of what I assert.

A few

1791.

A few days after my return to Luxembourg, I quitted that place and went to Coblentz, to visit the princes, brothers to the king. I told them my real sentiments of the situation of France, and of the disposition of the people and army. I afterwards reduced my reflections to writing, and then presented them to their Royal Highnesses. I represented, that if one part of the people (meaning the land-holders) were inimical to the new constitution, yet there was a very considerable majority in favour of it, from motives of interest, vanity, or ambition; that the revolutionary clubs, established in every town, had the direction of the lower order of people, and thus kept in awe those who were well affected; that the country people were no otherwise attached to the new order of things, than as it was the means of lightening their burdens; and if once assured that the old system of taxation would not be again established, and that they should experience the same relief by an equitable distribu-

1791. distribution of the public imposts, they would probably be detached from the new constitution: the return of their priests, and the restoration of their religious worship, I considered as one means of reclaiming them to the ancient form of government. I remarked that the great towns (with the exception of Paris, the fountain-head of the revolution) were less favourably disposed towards the present order of things, than the smaller, because they had suffered more by the absence of the rich; or by the annihilation of their wealth. In fine, I assured them that, at this moment, all France was against the old government, except some few individuals interested in the re-establishment of it, such as the clergy, nobility, the members of the different parliaments, and those employed in the department of the finances: that by nothing but force could things be replaced on the former footing; and that should they assemble an army powerful enough to reduce the people, it would not be sufficient to retain them in subjec-

subjection; the only way I observed to 1791.
secure the obedience of a whole nation,
was by establishing an order of things
agreeable to the wishes of the multitude,
and suited to their wants; I admitted that
to effect a counter-revolution, or rather a
favourable change in the situation of the
kingdom, the presence of foreign armies
upon the frontier was undoubtedly ne-
cessary; either as the means of leading to
a negotiation, the success of which I
thought extremely probable, or for the
subjugation of the people, which was a
more difficult task: but to establish and
maintain order, and to give permanency
and stability to the royal power, there
was no way left but to ameliorate the
condition of the people, and redress their
old grievances. This, said I, is a period
when sacrifices must be made, they are
become indispensable; it is mere delusion
to imagine that the nobility can be rein-
stated in all their privileges, the parlia-
ments recover their ancient importance,
the clergy its riches and prerogatives, or
the

1791. the government the unlimited absolute power which it formerly exercised.

It will appear that the only point in which I erred was in calculating the resistance the foreign armies would meet with from the French; a matter which will ever be the subject of my astonishment. My observations, however, did not coincide with the opinion of the generality of those who like myself had quitted the kingdom, particularly that part who were in the confidence of the princes; the only point upon which we were unanimous, was the facility with which the conquest of France might be achieved, and its inhabitants reduced by force of arms; whilst this was the only thing in which I was mistaken: my remarks then, as may be supposed, produced no great effect.

About the beginning of August, I went to reside at Mayence, to which place I was invited by the elector, a man of sense and merit, extremely affable in his manners:

manners: the Prussian minister had likewise engaged me to meet him there: on the part of his master, he expressed the deepest concern for the situation of the king of France, intimating a desire in conjunction with the emperor to effect his deliverance by force. This monarch likewise made me an offer of a command in his service, which I was then unable to accept.

1791.

During my residence at Mayence, I was engaged in collecting some preparatory information relative to the project of the king of Sweden: I consulted several of our most distinguished naval officers; I even persuaded them to reconnoitre a part of the French coast which I pointed out to them, desiring them to gain every intelligence in their power, and to establish if possible a safe correspondence there; this was to be executed before winter, which it actually was, and with much success. I now wrote to the king of Sweden, proposing to him to procure

1791. some sea-port, where his vessels might rendezvous in case of separation, and where he might deposit his military stores. The place I pointed out to him as peculiarly adapted for these purposes, was Ostend, which I begged him to demand of the emperor.

Some time in August, the king of Prussia, through the medium of his minister at Mayence, desired me to be at Pilnitz on the 26th or 27th of that month, requesting that I would bring with me a plan for the disposition and operations of the foreign armies upon the different parts of the French frontier. This I in a short time completed, and repairing to Coblenz, submitted it to the council of the princes, by whom it was approved: at this council assisted marshals Broglie and Castries. The king of Prussia appeared to me disposed to succour the French king, and I had no doubt that his interview with the emperor had for its object a confederation between those two powerful sovereigns,

1791.

reigns, to which others would shortly accede; and that a declaration of war would be the result. I set out therefore, for Pilnitz, having previously apprised the king of Sweden of the approaching conference, and communicated to him my conjectures; it was to take place on the 27th or 28th of August. The count d'Artois came likewise to Pilnitz, but not through an invitation from the two sovereigns; his object was to solicit their assistance in favour of the king his brother, and the French monarchy. I shall not speak of the principal topics which were discussed at this meeting, between two great sovereigns, who seemed to forget the animosity which had subsisted between their predecessors, and entered into a treaty which was the astonishment of all Europe, but which was of no long duration. After many difficulties, the count d'Artois obtained from them the following declaration, which having been in part published at the time, may be inserted here with propriety.

1791.

DECLARATION of PILNITZ.

" His majesty the emperor, and his ma-
 " jesty the king of Prussia, having heard
 " the wishes and representations of Mon-
 " sieur, and his highness the count d'Artois,
 " do conjointly declare, that they regard
 " the situation of his majesty the king of
 " France as an object of common interest
 " to all the sovereigns of Europe; they
 " hope that this interest cannot fail of being
 " recognised by those powers whose assist-
 " ance is demanded; they profess their
 " readiness, in concert with such powers, to
 " employ the most efficacious means rela-
 " tively to their abilities, for enabling the
 " king of France, in the most perfect li-
 " berty, to lay the foundation of a monar-
 " chical government, calculated alike to
 " secure the rights of the sovereign and
 " the welfare of the French nation. Then
 " and in that case their majesties the em-
 " peror and king of Prussia are resolved
 " to act promptly, and by mutual accord,
 " with the forces necessary to attain the
 " common object proposed: in the mean
 " time

"time they will give suitable orders to
 "their troops, that they may be prepared
 "to enter on immediate action.

1791.

"Given at Pilnitz, Aug. 27, 1791:

(Signed) "LEOPOLD.

"FREDERICK WILLIAM."

This declaration amounted to nothing. The two expressions, *then* and *in that case*, positively shewed that the intervention of all the other powers was necessary before the emperor or the king of Prussia would take any offensive and active measures. The views of the emperor were pacific, while those of the king of Prussia, on the contrary, were entirely hostile. Of this I am well assured from some circumstances which I have collected that passed at their interview; and it has been confirmed to me by persons who were in their confidence.

I now perceived that the king of Sweden had said nothing more than the truth, when he told me that he was on indifferent terms

1791. with his crowned brethren: the two sovereigns gave me the most unequivocal proofs of their prepossession against his Swedish majesty, which seemed to rebound upon me. They expressed a disapprobation of his projects, and had these not received some weight from the countenance of the empress of Russia, they would have opposed their execution. I am not willing to believe with some persons, that the emperor and king of Prussia wished to take advantage of the misfortunes of France; but that such were not the intentions of the king of Sweden and the empress of Russia, is at least very certain; both of them, but particularly the latter, being extremely interested to prevent the dissolution of the French empire,

I was to have conferred with marshal de Laspi and prince Hohenloe, general to his Prussian majesty, upon the plan which I had been ordered to draw up for the disposition of the armies: the former, however, informed us that he had received no orders to that effect from the emperor.

This prince apprised both me and the Prussian general, of his desire that we should follow him to Prague, whither he was going to be crowned. I went thither in the beginning of September, but was eight or ten days without receiving any orders from the emperor. In the mean time I learned that the dispositions of the cabinet of Vienna were by no means of a warlike nature; and in justice to marshal de Lasce, I must say that he several times repeated to me his opinion that a war was not to be hastily entered into with France, the resources of which country were immense, and their frontier impenetrable; and that this war might be attended with consequences extremely dangerous both to the emperor and the empire. This was likewise, I must own, the opinion of all the imperial ministers. Leopold then wished to terminate the affairs of France by means of negotiation. His plan was to form a league between all the powers of Europe, to surround France on every side with their armies, and then to publish a manifesto requiring

1791.

quiring the French government to restore the king and royal family to their liberty, to reinstate his majesty in his dignity, and to re-establish the monarchy upon a solid basis, and upon reasonable principles; threats of an invasion, and an attack upon all points were to be held out, and to be executed in case of a refusal. The king of Prussia, on the contrary, was for immediately declaring war against France; the manifesto, which he considered as a sort of summons, he was of opinion should not be published till the moment when the combined armies should enter the French territory.

It will doubtless be thought that the cabinet of Berlin was guided in its conduct by great political views; and that the king of Prussia was desirous of engaging the emperor in a long, dangerous, and expensive war, from which he might afterwards disengage himself, and throw all the burden upon his rival: a plan he has since put in practice. On the contrary, it would be a matter of astonishment were it known

how

how trifling were the means employed to determine this monarch to unite with the rival of his power, and the natural enemy of his country, against the subverters of thrones and monarchies—an union which the habitual politics of the two cabinets shortly after broke, to the detriment of these powers, and their allies. 1791.

I now communicated to the king of Sweden what I had discovered, respecting the political views of the courts of Vienna and Berlin; I informed him of my uncertainty with regard to the manner in which they would act offensively, and of their dislike both to his projects and those of the empress; I advised him, with the money he should receive from Spain, to levy an army in Germany, either for the purpose of incorporating it with his own, or of acting in concert with it; I again urged him to procure some strong place, such as Ostend, and likewise a small extent of territory near the French frontier, where he might assemble his forces.

CHAP. XIII.

Letter of the king of Sweden.—Affairs in France take an unfavourable turn.—Pacific conduct of the emperor.—Descent meditated on the coast of France.—Death of the emperor.—The French declare war.

1791.

AT last, on the 12th of September, I received an order from the emperor to wait upon him, and bring with me the plan which he had desired me to draw up. I accordingly went, and was introduced into that prince's closet. His imperial majesty told me, that he had not been able to speak to me sooner of the object for which he had sent for me, as he waited for answers from the courts of Russia, Spain, England, and the principal sovereigns of Italy; these he had now received, and they were conformable to his own views and intentions; he was assured of the assistance and

and co-operation of all the above powers, 1791.
except England, which had expressed its
determination to observe the most scrupu-
lous neutrality. He informed me, that he
proposed assembling a congress, to treat
with the representatives of the French na-
tion, not only for the purpose of procuring
a redress of the grievances of the Germanic
body, whose rights in Alsace and other
frontier provinces had been violated by the
new French government, but likewise to
consult upon the means of restoring order
in France, the anarchy of which country
disturbed the repose of all Europe; he
added, that this negotiation would be sup-
ported by powerful armies, by which
France would be surrounded; and he hoped,
that this method would prevent a bloody
war, the last resource to be employed.

I took the liberty of asking the emperor,
if he was informed of the real intentions
of the king of France; he said he was,
and that he knew nothing could be more
contrary to the wishes of that prince, than

to

1791. to employ violent means: he told me, likewise, that the new constitution, he was assured, would in a few days be presented to the king, who, he supposed, must unavoidably accede to it without the least restriction, as any objection or hesitation, however slight, might endanger the life of himself and family; but a sanction thus extorted was of no validity, and would permit his majesty to retract all he had done, and bestow on France a government which should be agreeable to the people, and yet leave to the sovereign the power necessary to preserve tranquillity at home, and secure peace from abroad.

He then asked me for the plan I had drawn up, assuring me he would at his leisure examine it; he added, that I might return to Mayence, where count de Brown, who was to command his forces, but who was then in the Low Countries, would give me notice, as well as prince Hohenloe, who was going into Franconia, of the time proper for a conference.

On

On seeing the emperor, after the interview at Pilnitz, adopt measures so pacific and reasonable, I concluded it was in consequence of having consulted Louis the Sixteenth, whose constant wish was to effect an accommodation; and to negotiate, rather than have recourse to arms.

1791!

I learned for a certainty, that it had never been in agitation to station fifteen thousand Austrians on the frontier near Luxembourg, to protect the king on his arrival at Montmedi; his majesty, I have reason to believe, only gave me that assurance to remove my apprehensions.

On my return to Mayence, I found the following letter from the king of Sweden. I shall not burden my Memoirs with those I had sent him, as they treated entirely of military and political projects, none of which took effect.

“Dortningholm, Sept. 2d, 1791.

“Monfieur le marquis de Bouillé, I have just received, and almost at the same

1791.

“time, your two letters, of the eleventh
“of August, and of the sixteenth. I am
“much obliged to you for the news which
“they contain. The interview at Pilnitz
“will determine many things, and, indeed,
“it is time to come to some resolution, as
“winter is approaching; and for myself, I
“know but one insurmountable obstacle to
“the projects of life—that presented by
“nature. This, however, unless they
“make a speedy decision, will become the
“most servicable ally of the national assem-
“bly. As I intend again writing to you
“by the courier whom I shall dispatch
“from hence as soon as I am acquainted
“with the final determination of the em-
“press, I shall reserve for that letter my
“remarks on the memorial mentioned in
“yours of the sixteenth; in the mean time
“I must inform you, that according to all
“I have been able to collect from the
“seamen and the sea charts here, it appears
“that the port of Ostend is not capable of
“receiving a fleet; and it is besides to be
“remarked, that to enter this port is im-
“possible,

1791.

“ possible, without passing before Dunkirk.
“ This, however, will not prevent the ex-
“ ecution of the project, provided a safe
“ place can be found to winter at; but you
“ must likewise perceive, that this requires
“ a combined operation which cannot take
“ place; and that when once the fleet leaves
“ the port of Ostend, it must proceed im-
“ mediately to execute its object; a cir-
“ cumstance which suits me very well, as
“ all great complicated plans are almost
“ sure to fail. On this subject, however,
“ I shall write to you more particularly in
“ a few days. It gives me great satisfaction
“ to see such harmony reign between you
“ and the princes. The count d’Artois is
“ of a disposition to do justice to your
“ merit, and set a proper value on your
“ zeal. On this critical occasion you will,
“ I am persuaded, see him display the vir-
“ tues of a descendant of Henry the
“ Fourth; I know him possessed of the
“ frankness and generosity of that prince,
“ and of the germ of all those qualities

F F

“ which

1791.

“ which excite enthusiasm, and thus add
“ strength to that interest which misfor-
“ tunes alone have the privilege of in-
“ spiring.

“ The neutrality of England, which
“ you mention to me, would be a great
“ point. With respect to Holland, I ques-
“ tion whether much reliance can be placed
“ upon its troops. To put such a mass in
“ motion is too complicated an affair. As
“ for myself, I am ready whenever pro-
“ vided with the proper means, and in
“ three weeks after I shall have received
“ the order, the army will be at the place
“ of embarkation. I am curious to know
“ who will command the combined armies
“ of the Empire, Austria, and Prussia; the
“ nomination will be attended with much
“ difficulty, but on the opinion conceived
“ of the abilities of the person chosen will
“ depend the success of the enterprise.
“ But secrecy respecting the expedition
“ entrusted to my care is absolutely essen-
“ tial;

" tial; at all events, I depend on having 1791.
 " you with me, and that will be as good
 " as ten thousand men.

" In my dominions the most perfect
 " tranquillity reigns, and we have just
 " finished a most abundant harvest. All
 " this is favourable to my views, but the
 " season is far advancing, and that is
 " the sole inconvenience I fear. I hope
 " you will continue to let me frequently
 " hear from you, and that you are per-
 " suaded of my esteem.

" May the Almighty, M. de Bouillé,
 " keep you under his holy protection!
 " Yours affectionately,

" GUSTAVUS."

It will be observed, that at that time the king of Sweden firmly believed the emperor and king of Prussia would declare war against France, and invade it in the spring; whereas, on the contrary, the French nation declared war against all Europe.

1791.

He placed much dependence on the assistance of the empress of Russia, and the resolution she had expressed to support a cause which was become that of all sovereigns; he likewise counted on her influence in the great cabinets of Europe: but we have seen, that her Imperial majesty took a very indirect part in this great affair. Policy was more powerful than that sense of glory which had hitherto guided Catherine, and which it was supposed would still guide her on the present occasion.

On my return to Mayence, I learned the favourable reception which my proposals to enter into the service of the empress had met with. In addition to my demands, she had added an honorary and pecuniary appointment, much beyond my pretensions. The letter containing her answer had been received six weeks before at Paris, by baron Grimm, the intimate confidant of the empress; but he had not been able to transmit it to me sooner, not knowing where I was.

Nearly

1791.

Nearly at the same time, I learned that I had incurred the empress's displeasure, by engaging myself with the king of Sweden at the moment when I was in treaty with her. This was contrary to what he had assured me. I now began, however, to perceive that I had acted in a very inconsistent manner. I hoped to repair my fault, not only by informing the empress of the motives (certainly disinterested) which had induced me to accept the offers of the king of Sweden, and expressing my gratitude for those which she had made me with so much nobleness and generosity; but at the same time by representing to her, that her war with the Turks being terminated, I thought she had no occasion for my services, in consequence of which I had considered it my duty to engage with a prince who, seconding the efforts of her imperial majesty, in a manner devoted himself, for the safety of my sovereign, and the establishment of the French monarchy.

At the time I wrote this letter I dispatched one to the king of Sweden, acquainting

1791. acquainting him with my embarrassment, and reminding him of the terms of my engagement, which I conceived to be that I should only be employed on such occasions as furnished me with an opportunity of serving my king and country. I told him likewise how necessary it was for the Swedish and Russian troops to leave the Baltic before winter, that they might be in a condition to act the following spring.

In the interval, between my writing to the king of Sweden and receiving his answer, events occurred in France which I had not foreseen, and which occasioned me no small surprise and uneasiness. The constituent assembly having completed the new constitution, presented it to the king, who accepted it without the least alteration; having only made some slight observations upon the defects it seemed to him to contain: I learned likewise, that this assembly, which had lost all its importance, as well as the esteem and confidence of the nation, then under the dominion of the Orleanists and Jacobins united, had separated after having

1791.

having appointed an election of new deputies, who were to form a permanent national assembly, destined for the future to represent the French nation, to retain in their own hands the whole legislative power, and transmit it successively to other assemblies, which were to be renewed at periods stated in the constitution. The Jacobins, I understood, had made themselves masters of the elections; so that the majority of the new assembly consisted of men of the most abandoned characters, but at the same time bold and daring in the extreme. It was much to be apprehended then, that they would complete the work their predecessors had begun, and destroy every vestige of the monarchy, suppressing even the name of a king. The constituent assembly, it appeared, previous to dissolving itself, had, at the instance of La Fayette, revoked the decree it had passed for arresting and bringing to trial all persons accused of having been concerned in the departure of the king from Paris on the 21st of June; it

1791. had likewise abolished all proceedings relative to the events of the revolution; lastly, I was informed that La Fayette had resigned the command of the national guard of Paris, that he was appointed to succeed me as commander of the armies of the Meuse and Moselle, and that he was actually then at Metz.

Though on many occasions I have had reason to blame the proceedings of La Fayette, not only towards myself, but likewise towards the king, whom he treated, particularly after his arrest at Varennes, with an insolence and harshness unexampled, but which perhaps he thought necessary to secure himself from the fury of the Jacobins; though at the same time his political conduct was very reprehensible; yet I must acknowledge, that his behaviour, with respect to me was certainly generous, and it was the more meritorious as, had the king not been arrested at Varennes, there is every reason to believe La Fayette would have been massacred by the people, who

had 5 held

held him responsible for the king's escape. 1791.
In the letter which I sent from Luxembourg to the assembly, I likewise warmly attacked him. His conduct then, on the present occasion, is a sufficient proof of his moderation. He never was, I repeat it, a man of a bad heart; but that enthusiastic love of liberty which he acquired in America, joined to an immoderate thirst for glory, and sentiments of philanthropy, inflamed his bosom, raised in him exalted notions, and diverted his qualities towards a dangerous point, making one of the chiefs of the revolution, a young man who, when experience should have calmed the deceitful ardour of youth, might perhaps have become one of the best servants to his sovereign, and a strenuous support to the monarchy. Here then I must express my sincere wishes for his restoration to liberty and tranquillity, hoping at the same time, that the events he has witnessed, and the misfortunes he has gone through, may have cured him of his revolutionary frenzy.

Many

1791.

Many months in the mean time had elapsed, without any appearance of the emperor's projects being carried into execution: I saw no armies assembled on the French frontier, nor did I hear of any congress formed to treat with the existing government in France; I began, therefore, to imagine that the king was in hopes, by his acceptance of the new constitution, to quiet the public mind, and procure a return of his own tranquillity; consequently that he had prevailed on the emperor and the other allied powers to take no step which might lead to hostilities, that being what he studiously endeavoured to avoid. In this opinion I was confirmed by the hesitation of the court of Spain to furnish the king of Sweden with the fifteen millions of livres which it had promised him, to defray the expences of his expedition. His Swedish majesty had desired me to write on this subject, in his name, to the Spanish minister: this I did, but receiving an answer couched in terms extremely vague, I advised that prince to open a loan, either in Holland, or in some of the free maritime

time towns of the North, under the guarantee of Spain, whose intentions, however, with respect to the affairs of France, appeared to me changed. 1791.

Meantime I was informed that anarchy was daily gaining ground in France, and this was but too clearly proved by the crowds of emigrants of every description who came for refuge to the adjoining frontier. These, as they arrived, were armed and embodied on the banks of the Rhine, forming a little army which threatened the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine: this was a step, however, which awakened the fury of the people, and contributed much to the success of the destructive projects of the Jacobins and anarchists. The emigrants even wished to make an attempt upon Strasbourg, where, they thought, from the intelligence they had received, they had partisans who would put them in possession of the gates; but the king, coming to the knowledge of their intentions, employed his orders, and even his intreaties, to

1791. to prevent them from committing any act of hostility: he sent to the princes his brothers, baron de Viomenil, and the chevalier de Coigny, who were charged to represent in the strongest terms, his disapprobation of the arming of the French nobility, a measure which met with every possible obstacle from the emperor likewise, but yet was still continued.

Towards the latter end of December I received the following letter from the king of Sweden. It contains answers to several passages of one which I had written him in the month of September preceding.

“ Stockholm, Dec. 23, 1791.

“ M. de Bouillé, all the letters which
“ you have written to me are come safe
“ to hand: be assured I have read them
“ with that attention which is due to
“ whatever comes from a man of your
“ merit, and treats of subjects in which
“ I take so lively and sincere an interest.
“ I will not conceal from you, however,
“ that

1791.

“ that there is one of your letters which
“ has given me both surprise and concern.
“ I thought that at Aix-la-Chapelle we
“ had made an agreement, which, as a
“ French cavalier, you would faithfully
“ observe. Zeal for the cause of your
“ unfortunate sovereign having led you
“ to quit your country, and attach your-
“ self to me, his oldest, and, as you now
“ see, his only faithful ally; I supposed
“ none but he could persuade you to
“ leave me, and that Sweden was become
“ your second country: I flatter myself,
“ however, that it was attachment to
“ your sovereign, that sentiment so noble
“ and respectable, which carried you by
“ a very natural enthusiasm towards those
“ who you then thought were going to
“ serve his cause. Since that time you
“ have had an opportunity of seeing
“ whether they or I had most zeal and
“ steadfastness joined to sincerity: your
“ eyes, I have no doubt, are opened, and
“ I shall say nothing further upon the
“ subject; but you ought to thank me
“ for

1791.

“ for having, with the frankness of a
“ gentleman, spoken to you of what lay
“ next my heart. I now regard you as en-
“ tirely my own, requesting you to consider
“ me as entirely yours. This then is
“ what I could not write you by the
“ post, nor could I resolve to write at all
“ without unbosoming myself to you:
“ let us speak no more of this, but direct
“ all our attention towards the means of
“ extricating your sovereign from his pre-
“ sent situation. You already know that
“ the treaty signed between me and the
“ empress has just been ratified; her con-
“ stancy and mine are not dubious: you
“ have seen likewise that we are the
“ only sovereigns who have sent mi-
“ nisters to the princes; and I can assure
“ you in confidence, that our respective
“ ambassadors have received orders to
“ quit Paris under pretext of leave of
“ absence, and that we are making pre-
“ parations and concerting measures against
“ the approaching spring; but we have
“ agreed to lay asleep the national as-
“ sembly,

“ ssembly, lest they should equip a naval
“ force, which would much embarrass us, 1791.
“ and oblige us to make greater prepa-
“ rations, as we can have no communi-
“ cation with you but by sea; at least
“ the empress is under apprehensions of
“ this kind, and the large ships now in
“ the port of Brest seem to confirm her
“ suspicions. In the mean time she does
“ not cease to press the emperor and the
“ king of Prussia; and I entertain no
“ doubt but this princess will at last suc-
“ ceed in persuading the chief of the
“ empire of the obligations he is under
“ as a sovereign, as a brother, and as em-
“ peror, to carry relief to his sister, and
“ an oppressed monarch. What you tell
“ me of the sentiments of the queen of
“ France, must add weight to the repre-
“ sentations already made to his Imperial
“ majesty, and deprive him of all further
“ pretexts. In the mean time the empress
“ persists in her resolution of doing
“ nothing which may discover her in-
“ tention

1791.

“tention of an attack in the approaching
“spring, and this is the reason why I
“cannot enter into any treaty for the
“troops you mention as going to quit
“the service of the United Provinces:
“besides, you know Spain is to furnish
“the money; and though nothing can
“be fairer than the promises she holds
“out to me, yet hitherto they have been
“void of effect. Every thing here is
“however in readiness; and that I may
“get rid of all embarrassments, and esta-
“blish perfect order in my finances, de-
“ranged by the various demands brought
“in since the war, I am going to con-
“voke the States General of my king-
“dom; so you see I am getting my hand
“in: this assembly will, I hope, instead
“of causing disorder, procure the return
“of order and tranquillity, and act like
“the spear of Achilles, which alone could
“heal the wounds itself had given. I
“am moreover tolerably well versed in
“the tactics of diets; would I were as
“well

" well skilled in those of Turenne, that
 " I might render essential assistance to the
 " cause of all true Frenchmen; what I
 " am deficient, however, will be made
 " up by my second, who, I hope will not
 " desert me. To secure him I have
 " transmitted to him the patent and
 " brevet of his office, as well as those for
 " the count de Bouillé and the che-
 " valier de Rodéz, begging to remind him
 " of his promise to be my second and
 " companion in arms. Adieu, M. de
 " Bouillé, may the Almighty take you
 " under his holy protection !

1791.

" GUSTAVUS."

" P.S. I have written to count Lo-
 " venheim my minister at the Hague,
 " to give all the necessary information
 " concerning the troops you mentioned."

It may be seen by this letter that the king
 of Sweden was very doubtful as to the
 real projects of the emperor and his allies,
 who, at that time must have been de-
 termined

1791. terminated to take no part in the affairs of France. Of this the empress was undoubtedly informed, but she had not yet communicated the circumstance to him. I knew she was then employing all her influence with the emperor and the king of Prussia for the purpose of inducing them to declare war against France; to the former of these sovereigns she had even written a letter in very strong terms, in which she represented to him that the king of Prussia, to avenge a simple omission of respect towards his sister, had marched an army into Holland, whilst he tamely suffered every species of insult to be heaped upon the queen of France, quietly remaining a spectator whilst she was degraded from her rank and dignity, and her husband stripped of his crown. Towards Spain, which, by the advice of count d'Aranda, had adopted a pacific conduct, the empress acted with equal vigour.

Nevertheless the emperor, after the acceptance of the new constitution by Louis

the Sixteenth, consented again to receive the ambaffador from France, whom he had before forbid his court; he was even the first monarch who suffered the national flag to enter his ports. Spain, Russia, and Sweden were at this time the only powers that ordered their ambaffadors to leave Paris. From all these circumstances it is evident that the views of Leopold were directed towards peace, and that in this respect he was under the influence of the king and queen of France.

I had now been long engaged in collecting information relative to the project concerted between the empress of Russia and the king of Sweden. A descent upon the French coast might be made, I found, in five different places, and having drawn up a statement of the advantages and disadvantages attendant on each, I transmitted it to the latter sovereign for his consideration. In case the confederate princes, conformably to the emperor's plan, should have set on foot a negotiation sup-

1791. ported by their armies, I recommended it to him to land near Dunkirk, and there secure his position by occupying the entrenched camp which is below that town; if, on the contrary it was determined to act offensively, and penetrate by the French frontier, I advised him to disembark his army in a province at a less distance from Paris, where he might find a safe repository for his arms, and a large navigable river, by which he might transport his ammunition and provisions; in the place I pointed out to him we should likewise have had correspondents, partizans, and resources of every kind. This plan of operations, which contained every particular necessary to be known, I sent
1792. in the beginning of the month of January to the king of Sweden; and it was afterwards approved by the empress. The winter passed without any sign of movement among the foreign troops on the frontier of France, or any thing that in the least announced an approaching war: I was even informed by the elector of Mayence,

Mayence, that the emperor was much averse to it, and the inclinations of the king of France, by what we could learn, were similar. M. Mallet du Pan, who deservedly enjoyed his confidence, was dispatched by him to the king of Prussia and the duke of Brunswick on a secret mission, the object of which is related in the Memoirs of M. de Bertrand lately published. 1792.

The emigrants at this time constituted an army of from fifteen to eighteen thousand men, consisting principally of a very brilliant cavalry. Whilst at Mayence I saw M. Mallet du Pan, who informed me of the king's pacific disposition, and of his resignation under very disquieting circumstances. M. Mallet du Pan had no intention of returning to France, where the truth with which he had depicted the crimes committed during the revolution, and the impartiality with which he had exposed the errors of the different parties, had exposed him to the dangers of proscription,

1792.

Towards the latter end of February I received the following letter from the king of Sweden, which was unfortunately the last.

“ Geflé, Feb. 6, 1792.

“ Yours of the 9th of January, M. de
“ Bouillé, came safe to hand a few days
“ ago. I expect with impatience the arrival of your son, who shall be received as
“ one of your family: that is saying
“ enough.

“ I have long beheld with concern the
“ little secrecy which prevails in the councils of Coblenz; it is the natural consequence of too extended a confidence. I
“ have been too often in the practice either
“ of guiding, or of opposing revolutions;
“ not to know that they can never be effected unless one person has the sole management of them; and that he must only
“ consult his own heart. Would the count
“ d'Artois believe this, I have not the least
“ doubt of his capacity to bring the vessel

“ to

1792.

“ to port; but it is the misfortune of the
 “ Bourbons, that with all the qualities ne-
 “ cessary to form heroes, they have a dis-
 “ trust of themselves, which is really un-
 “ just, and leads them to take too much
 “ counsel. However, there is no occasion
 “ to despair; the empress of Russia seems
 “ daily more disposed to abide by her ge-
 “ neros resolutions, which only acquire
 “ new strength from the obstacles which
 “ are presented to her. Having, on the
 “ ninth of January, signed a treaty of peace
 “ with the Turks, at Jassy, she will now
 “ have her hands more at liberty. With
 “ respect to myself, I am near the close of
 “ my diet, which to the surprise of all my
 “ adversaries, and perhaps of my friends,
 “ passes with the most perfect tranquillity.
 “ Wishing to assist my friends in the re-
 “ establishment of order, I thought I should
 “ begin at home, and endeavour to compose
 “ divisions there. Of three orders I was
 “ certain; and the nobility, which in 1789
 “ was most violent against me, is kept in
 “ awe by the decided majority I have in

1792.

“ the lower orders, and the constant at-
“ tachment they shew me. I am endea-
“ vouring to make the nobles comprehend,
“ that in the eighteenth century, the first
“ order in the state must sustain itself by the
“ stability of the throne, and its protec-
“ tion, and not by contending against its
“ sovereign; but they do not yet perfectly
“ understand their interest; they know,
“ however, that they are the weakest,
“ and begin to have prudence enough not
“ to set themselves in opposition to their
“ king and the three other orders, which,
“ combined, have the power of enacting
“ laws.

“ Such being the situation of things, I
“ have very little doubt but all will go to
“ my entire satisfaction; I shall then have
“ the advantage of being the only sove-
“ reign who ever ventured to convoke so
“ great an assembly, and succeeded. It is
“ true, I am a little versed in the tactic of
“ diets; were I as well acquainted with
“ military tactics, I should not fear your
“ Luckners

“ Luckniers and Rochambeaus; but I shall 1792.
“ have good soldiers and an able assistant,
“ so that I am not very apprehensive of
“ failing.

“ Adieu, M. de Bouillé, &c.

“ GUSTAVUS.”

It appears, that the king of Sweden placed much reliance on the active part the empress of Russia would take in the affairs of France; this, however, never extended beyond professions. His Swedish majesty laboured under an error, and there is every reason to believe that Catherine would never have furnished him with eighteen thousand Russians, as she had promised; besides, I am persuaded, the emperor and the king of Prussia had never admitted him to a knowledge of their views or projects; both of them had a personal aversion for him, and were desirous, that he should not at all actively intermeddle in the affairs of France.

In the month of February, Leopold died. There is not a doubt, but his imperial majesty

1792. jesty was disinclined to a war; but it is probable, that he would, notwithstanding, have been compelled to take arms by the Jacobins, who then directed every thing in France; who were desirous of war, and declared it soon afterwards, that they might put in execution their project of totally annihilating the monarchy, destroying their sovereign, and establishing a republic.

The elector of Mayence, who was intimately connected with the cabinet of Vienna, said to me, when the French declared war some time after the death of Leopold, " You are very happy that the French are the aggressors, otherwise, you " would have had no war." This prince, as well as myself, regarded a war as absolutely necessary, not only for the purpose of re-establishing order in France, but, likewise, to preserve the general tranquillity of Europe, through every part of which the Jacobins disseminated their principles, whose dangerous tendency soon appeared, as revolutions began already to be apprehended in the neighbouring states.

CHAP. XIV.

Numerous army levied by the French.—How effected.—Assassination of the king of Sweden.—Some account of that monarch, and of the conspiracy by which he lost his life.—I quit the service of Sweden.—Fall, and imprisonment of La Fayette.—He is succeeded in the command of the French army by Dumourier.—Longwy and Verdun taken by the Allies.—Conclusion.

THE French government in the mean 1792.
time prepared for war, having recourse
to means which I thought not only insuffi-
cient, but which I conceived it impossible
to reduce to practice; they have, neverthe-
less, succeeded. They raised a new army,
three times more numerous than that for-
merly kept up by France; they skilfully
employed, in defence of the country, those
national guards who had hitherto contri-
buted

1792.

buted to throw the kingdom into disorder. These were all formed into regiments, and put upon the same footing as the regular troops; the command of them was given to old or subordinate officers, who had quitted the service, and were very numerous in the provinces: most of them men of experience. Commissions were likewise given to those adventurers so frequently met with in France before the revolution, and since that event become still more common: men, whose only resource was their courage, their enterprise, and their industry. Legions of servants out of place, of men without professions, of artists who subsisted by the manufacture of luxuries now no longer wanted, of gentlemen's game-keepers, smugglers, and the thousands formerly engaged in the service of the farmers-general, and in the collection of the public revenue: these came flocking in crowds to recruit the national army.

The officers who had quitted their regiments to join the princes were replaced by subaltern

subaltern officers, consisting principally of tradesmen's sons who had received a good education, but had been led to adopt a military life by their libertine conduct; these, more accustomed to obey than command, had, nevertheless, long been instructed in the military discipline. Some few generals also, disgusted with the court, remained in France attached to the new constitution; of this number, were La Fayette and the too celebrated Dumourier; to these, succeeded men whom nature had endowed with talents, which the circumstances of the times developed: the government, confined in its choice of officers to no particular class, gave the most distinguished of these the means of displaying themselves. They formed a staff, beyond dispute, the ablest in Europe; the members who composed it, were chosen from among the civil and military engineers, most remarkable for their skill and activity. They established a military council, which directed the operations of the armies, themselves being guided by the plans, journals, and memoirs of the most

1792.

1792. most experienced generals, who, during a space of one hundred and fifty years, had made campaigns upon the frontier; which materials, under the old government, had been formed into a complete work, destined for the use and instruction of all French generals. Tactics were likewise framed upon simple and easy principles; and the French, in the course of the war, invented a new system of manœuvres unknown to their enemies; to which they were indebted for a great part of their victories. They had, besides, the best artillery in Europe; the ablest engineers; the strongest towns, which they repaired with incredible diligence; and a military discipline of so rigorous a nature, that in other armies it would have been thought cruel; while, at the same time, their soldiers were the best paid, the best fed and provided. To these circumstances, add the fanaticism of the troops and people, the military and political talents of general Dumourier, and the advantages gained by that general at the beginning of the war, and we shall no longer

longer be astonished, that the success of the French was as extraordinary as the composition of their army, and the spirit by which it was animated. 1792.

All winter the French were engaged in putting their frontier in a state of defence, sparing neither pains nor expence. They established founderies for cannon at Paris and in many other towns; every where were manufactories for arms, and all France resembled one vast arsenal. Those mechanic arts which before furnished articles of luxury, being now abandoned, the hands which they formerly occupied were employed in the fabrication of instruments of war. Every resource of finance was appropriated to the expences of the war, and preparations were made with such prudence and dispatch, that the following spring the French were in a condition to take the field; in the course of the first campaign, to act on the offensive; to quit and resume this plan; finally preserving it by the number and superiority of their armies, the excellence

1792.

cellence of their generals, and the undaunted courage of their soldiers. While anarchy and disorder reigned through France, while the different parties tore in pieces and mutually destroyed each other, while a popular tyrant was deluging her in blood, and commanding murder and every other crime; still did the enthusiastic love of liberty, the discipline, the obedience, and valour of her warriors, render her every where victorious. Not but that they were indebted for part of their successes to the faults of their enemies. Never was a confederation more necessary, never was one more powerful, and never was one more discordant. No alliance ever produced such numerous armies, but never were they worse employed. No longer did that spirit reign, which had directed the league formed to repress the ambition of Louis the Fourteenth, on occasion of the Spanish succession; yet that was an affair of far less consequence to the tranquillity of Europe. The military genius of Marlborough and Eugene seemed to have

have followed them to the grave. It was reserved for a young prince of the Imperial blood to recall victory, after a series of defeats, and to restore to the Imperial arms all their ancient glory. 1792.

In the night of the sixteenth and seventeenth of March the king of Sweden was assassinated, and with him fell his projects. By his death we were deprived rather of a useful friend, than a powerful ally. By me as an individual, his loss was most sensibly felt; not only his shining and heroic qualities had excited my esteem and admiration; I likewise felt for this prince an attachment which a knowledge of his openness and generosity, joined to that interest he ever took in my affairs, had inspired me with. I proposed attaching my fate to his, and (if I may be permitted so to express myself) uniting with his, my own fortune and existence. Even had the monarchy been re-established in France, I doubt whether that could have separated me from him. It perhaps may not be unpleasing to my

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readers,

1792. readers, if I insert some few particulars relative to the latter part of the life, the tragic death, the person and character of this monarch: on the authenticity of them they may depend.

The king of Sweden purposing to leave his dominions on a long and dangerous expedition which he meditated against France, had, in the month of January 1792, convened the states of his kingdom at Geflé, seventeen Swedish miles from Stockholm, for the purpose of insuring tranquillity during his absence, and of remedying the disorder into which his finances had been thrown, by his last war with the Russians. The diet was neither long nor tempestuous. The habitual discontent, shewn by the nobility since the abolition of the senate and their other prerogatives, still displayed itself, but without violence; it was restrained by the three other orders, who were entirely in the king's interest. These, in the course of the diet, even adopted a measure in which

which the first order took no part; they appointed a deputation to wait upon the king, to thank his majesty for having, in the diet of 1789, abolished the senate; and to confirm the sanction already given to the act for this purpose, which was called *the act of safety*. By it the royal authority received a considerable augmentation, as it destroyed the only body which could obscure or counterbalance* the king's prerogative, and rendered him arbiter of peace and war. This act, and this procedure on the part of the three inferior orders, were the more remarkable, as they were one ground of the conspiracy which broke out shortly after.

Some days before the closing of the diet, the four orders united, appointed a new deputation to the king, thanking him for the care he had bestowed on the education of the prince royal, and request-

* The estates themselves derive their existence from the king, who has the right of convoking them.

1792. ing that he might be examined in the different branches of instruction he was then pursuing. The examination took place in presence of the king and the deputies from the four orders. It was premised by a discourse from his majesty, addressed to the members of the députation, praying them to attend to the trial his son was about to undergo, that they might judge of his progress since his examination by the last diet.

Thus it is, that under this government the state and the sovereign are united in one object, and the successor of the monarch is brought up as the child of the nation, to which he is responsible for the education and virtues of his son. The states of the kingdom had been the infant's sponsors, and they watched over his improvement with a truly parental care, knowing how much their happiness would depend on his future character. The royal youth was interrogated by a bishop, upon the Lutheran religion, which is that
of

of the country; he was then examined by his preceptor in the Latin language, in ethics, and in history. On all these points he received plaudits, which excited in him tears of joy, announcing an amiable disposition, and a happy presage for his future subjects. 1792.

The diet closing on the 23d of February, the king immediately returned to Stockholm, overjoyed at having happily brought to a conclusion an assembly in which there were so many malcontents: he now hoped that he should be able to devote his whole attention to his projects of glory and ambition. Some add that he was no less delighted at having finished the diet before the beginning of March, an epoch the danger of which had been foretold to him, as to Cæsar, and which nevertheless proved equally fatal to him as to that great man.

Meantime the malcontents were forming projects of the most dangerous nature
H H 3 against

1792. against the king; and so little secrecy did they observe, that their measures were known, and every body expected an approaching explosion. That an alarming conspiracy existed, was evident, but who were the principal persons concerned, remained yet to be discovered. Baron d'Escars, then at Stockholm in quality of agent for the French princes, had been apprized of a plot formed against the life of his Swedish majesty, and had communicated the information to the superintendant of the police, who received and countersigned his deposition, but took no precautions in consequence. A foreigner of distinction who was then at Stockholm, and frequently saw the king in private, having a few days before received a letter from Germany, which mentioned a report prevalent there that the king of Sweden had been assassinated, acquainted his majesty with it, beseeching him to be more on his guard, and to profit by the warning he received from all quarters, representing to him that he had much to apprehend from

from his incensed nobility. The king
replied, that he would rather blindly de- 1792.
liver himself up to his destiny, than tor-
ment himself with the numberless precau-
tions which these suspicions would render
necessary: "Were I," said he, "to listen
"to every story of plots, I could not
"drink a glass of water; besides, I am
"far from giving credit to any report
"which accuses my subjects of meditating
"an attempt upon my life: the Swedes,
"though brave in war, are timid in po-
"litical affairs; and as success can hard-
"ly fail to attend my expedition against
"France, it is my intention to send all the
"trophies I take into Sweden, which
"will be the means of increasing my
"power by procuring me the general con-
"fidence and respect."

Such were the romantic notions of this
prince, and their natural effect was to
flatter his imagination, on fire for glory,
exalt his courage, and lay asleep his
prudence.

1792.

His measures at the same time awakened the animosity of the malcontents; who, to the thirst for vengeance occasioned by the suppression of the privileges of the nobility, the extension of the royal authority, the disorder which reigned in the finances, and the disproportion between the temper and projects of the king, and the limits of his power, joined the apprehensions excited by this expedition, which was openly treated as a mad attempt, likely to swallow up all the resources of Sweden both in men, money, and ships.

Such then were the grounds upon which this conspiracy was entered into: not but that it in part originated in the ambition of some daring individuals who are always the main spring of such an enterprise. To this may be added, an ill-conceived hatred; ingratitude, so common and so convenient in our days; a want of public spirit, and a sordid attachment to self-interest; that rage for liberty which a very sensible writer calls the hypocrisy of our age; and lastly, the reading of the
French

French papers, and the example of the revolutionary movements in France. Probably even that spirit of fanaticism which, as the king in his discourse to the diet said, "has shaken empires to their foundation, and given birth to so many *Seydes* *," contributed, if not to the origin, at least to the encouragement of criminal attempts; a fact avowed by some of the guilty: and to this was confined the influence of the French revolution and its agents on this event. 1792.

Whilst the diet was sitting at Geflé, the conspirators had made several attempts to execute their project, but without success, though the king was more indebted to his good fortune than his vigilance for his escape. Even after his return to Sweden, three of the principals in the plot had repaired to Haga, a country-seat of his Swedish majesty, about three miles from Stockholm, where he passed part of the

* A fanatical character in Voltaire's Tragedy of Mahomet.

1792. winter with few guards and a thin retinue. Approaching the palace about five in the evening, they placed themselves in ambush near the king's apartment, which was on the ground-floor, armed with carabines. Here they waited for an opportunity to dispatch him; when this prince, who was just returned from a long walk, came in his morning gown to repose in his library, the windows of which formed a door opening into the garden. Here having thrown himself into an arm-chair, he fell fast asleep, and the assassins, concluding him dead of an apoplexy, without waiting to see whether this was really the case, immediately went away. Finding their courage fail them in this and several subsequent attempts, they relied on the mask alone for boldness sufficient for the deed: however, it is well known, that on the fatal night, had the assassins been once more defeated in their purpose, so weary were they of their repeated disappointments for six months together, they would have renounced their project. But the time was now come, when Gustavus, like

one of his predecessors, and that the person he most admired, was to be cut off in a manner as tragical, and at as early an age. 1792.

This catastrophe took place at a masked ball at the opera, on the night of the 16th and 17th of March.

The king, while supping before the ball with a small number of persons belonging to his household, received an anonymous letter written in French, by which he was cautioned not to enter the ball-room, as it was intended there to assassinate him. The author of the letter professed neither to admire nor approve the king's political or moral conduct, and as a man who scorned disguise, he said he thought himself obliged to tell him so: he however advised the king, if he persisted in his intention of going to the ball, to be upon his guard when he found himself pressed by the crowd, as that was to be the signal; and on every occasion to beware of the chamber on the ground-floor at Haga.

By

1792.

By what motives the author of this letter was actuated, it is impossible to know; whether he thought by this means to absolve his conscience with respect to the king, without violating his engagement to his party, or whether, knowing the boldness of the king's character, he intended this anonymous warning as a bait to his courage: certain it is, as such it operated: his majesty shewed the letter to two or three persons who were at supper with him, passed some jests upon it, and in spite of their representations and intreaties, determined still to go to the masked ball.

He entered the room without the least embarrassment, walking arm in arm with Baron 'de Effen, his master of the horse. Scarce, however, had he made two turns when he found himself violently pressed by a crowd, as mentioned in the anonymous letter; immediately the assassins coming behind his majesty on the side unguarded, a pistol was discharged at him, and the contents, which were case-shot, lodged

lodged in his left side below the reins; they then instantly disappeared : in a moment the ball room was filled with smoke, and cries of Fire ! fire ! still added to the confusion. The king, by a motion which he made at the instant the pistol was fired, deprived it of its intended effect, which was to kill him upon the spot : he fell, however, on a bench, and directly ordered all the doors to be shut and every person to be unmasked. He was then led into one of the apartments of the opera-house, the conspirators not making the least attempt to finish their bloody work : the king at this moment received several foreign ministers, displaying the greatest courage and equal generosity ; for, having asked if the assassin was taken, and being answered in the negative, he exclaimed, " God grant he may not." The wretch however, after the commission of the horrid deed, had dropped his arms, and an attendant of the king's picked up one of the pistols ; a knife likewise, resembling that made use of by the infamous Ravillac,

1792.

1792.

vailiac, was found in the ball-room. The officers of the guard having caused the doors to be immediately shut, four persons only had time to escape, two of whom were conspirators, men distinguished for their rank. All present were then compelled to unmask, and to give in their names. The last person who quitted the ball-room was the assassin; who, as he passed the lieutenant of the police, said to him with effrontery, "I hope, sir, you have no suspicion of me;" the latter looked attentively at him, but made no attempt to stop him.

Whether it be that the national character partakes of the climate, or whether it arose from consternation or indifference, no noise, no tumult, announced this great event, either during that night or the following morning; a proof of what the conspirators might have effected had they possessed the courage to undertake it. But according to their plan the king should instantly have fallen; and if the delay which took

took place was not the means of saving his majesty's life, yet there is not a doubt but it preserved the state from a convulsion, the horrors and dangers of which are beyond all calculation. In order that public affairs might experience no obstruction, and to avoid the disagreeable inquiries after the criminals, of whom he would never hear speak, the king immediately appointed a council of regency, and at the head of it placed his brother the duke of Sudermania. 1792.

On the ensuing morning the assassin was found out by means of his arms, the maker having pointed out the person to whom he sold them. His name was Ankarsstroem, a Swedish gentleman, and formerly an officer in the guards. He was arrested in his own house, where he had remained, having taken no kind of precaution for his safety. Without hesitation he owned the arms, and acknowledged the crime: weary of life, he said, and desirous to avenge himself on the king for

an

1792. an unjust sentence* pronounced upon him, he had conceived this project, which he had long secretly entertained, and for which he expected to receive an ample reward from the nation†, or at least in dying, to have the consolation of having rendered a signal service to his country.

He at first denied the existence of any plot, and displayed great haughtiness in his answers; but a few days after, he made a full confession, declaring the names of the principal conspirators, the plans of the conspiracy, and the sum he was to receive for the king's assassination‡. He said the project had been formed ever since the month of October; that three attempts had been made to put it in execution, two at Stockholm, and one at Geflé. The whole of his deposition consisted of thirty-three

* He had been condemned to death for treason, and had been pardoned by the king.

† His first expression was from the opposition.

‡ Forty-eight thousand rix-dollars.

articles.

articles. When the king should be killed, it was proposed in like manner to dispatch some of the principal *grande*s of the kingdom, particularly barons de Taube and Armfeldt, intimate friends of the king; count de Ruth, *grand marshal* of the last diet; count Wachmeister, and the commanders of the different troops composing the garrison of Stockholm; to carry their heads upon pikes through the streets after the French manner; and then, with the artillery of the queen's regiment and that of the regiment of the blue guards, upon both which they thought they could depend, either to keep the people in awe, or gain them over to their party. The duke of Sudermania was to be deprived of his liberty, and perhaps of his life. Lastly, they proposed rendering themselves masters of the young king's person, intending then to compel him to sign and proclaim a new constitution analogous to the principles of the conspirators, and favourable to their interests.

1792.

1792.

The same day that Ankarstroem was taken into custody, the author of the anonymous letter was likewise arrested as he was coming out of the king's apartments, where he had passed part of the day. His name was M. de Lillienhorn, major of the blue guards, brought up and supported by his sovereign, who had drawn him from wretchedness and obscurity, and loaded him with his favours. A few days after his arrest he confessed that he was engaged in the conspiracy; seduced by the hope of obtaining, after the revolution, the command of the national guard of Stockholm, and purposing then to act the part of M. de la Fayette.

In the mean time the king's wound experienced frequent changes, which, added to the unskilfulness of his surgeons, (usual in Sweden,) soon left no hopes of his recovery. Amidst his sufferings he displayed unexampled courage and resignation. Not a groan, not a murmur escaped him; he preserved to the last that

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that presence of mind, that generosity which he had shewn at the first moment. He had several interviews with his family, and once with his court. He caused to be summoned not only his friends, but even those who had been of the number of his enemies, though they would have shrunk with horror from the idea of being engaged in so base a conspiracy: of this number was the celebrated marshal Fersen, to whom he was reconciled; as well as to count de Brake, first nobleman of the kingdom, and head of the opposition: to the latter he obligingly said, "I am now consoled for my misfortune, since it again brings round me my old friends." Neither his discourse nor his actions gave any reason to believe that he thought himself so near his end; but when he felt its approach, he sustained it without weakness, as he met it without surprise. That tranquillity of mind, which never even in death forsook him, enabled him to add to his will, a codicil relative to the education of his son. Speaking of this young prince,

1792. he said, "He will not be of age till he is
" eighteen, but I hope he will be a king
" at sixteen." He was desirous that his
son should imitate his own example, and,
like him, not lose a moment of royalty.
He himself exercised the functions of his
station to the last, signing, a few minutes
before he expired, a *brevet*, appointing
baron Armfeldt, his favourite, governor of
the city of Stockholm. Addressing him-
self to this gentleman, he said, "Give me
" your word of honour that you will serve
" my son as faithfully as you have served
" me." Having confessed to his high
almoner, he said to him, "I doubt whe-
" ther in the eyes of my Maker I have
" any great merit, but at least I have
" the consolation to reflect, that, wilfully,
" I never injured any person." It was
his intention to receive the sacraments
according to the forms of the Lutheran
church, and to take leave of the queen,
whom he had never once seen since his
wound; wishing to acquire strength to
support him on so trying an occasion as
this

this last, he was preparing to take some repose, when he expired, just as he had said to Borgenstierne, the nobleman in ordinary, Adieu! He died on the 19th of March 1792, about eleven o'clock in the morning, being forty-two years of age.

Such was the death of this extraordinary prince, whose life had been distinguished by so many brilliant actions, and who had hitherto been so successful. He may be ranked with the most celebrated kings of Sweden, whom he resembled as well in their good fortune as in their tragical end.

As soon as his death was made known, the prince royal was proclaimed king, by the name of Gustavus Adolphus: being then only thirteen years of age, the duke of Sudermania, his uncle, was appointed guardian to him and regent of the kingdom. The young king already shewed himself possessed of firmness and resolution,

1792.

with a desire of commanding, and much discretion and economy, qualities so essential in a Swedish monarch. He seemed of a warlike disposition, which, however, may be corrected by the virtues just mentioned, and by reflecting on the miseries entailed upon his country by the martial ambition of the first Gustavus Adolphus and Charles the Twelfth; and on the misfortune it drew on his own father,

The young king immediately received the oaths of the duke of Sudermania and almost all the nobility, not only to the maintenance of the constitution of 1772, which was entirely the work of the late king, but to that of the act of safety passed in 1789, which had abolished the senate, and caused the assassination of the king. In many provinces, during the king's illness, the people had already sworn to maintain this act; and the Dalecarlians, ever ready to defend and support their sovereign, were on the point of setting out for Stockholm to give him this fresh

proof

proof of their attachment. Thus, the few days which the Swedish monarch survived his assassination were sufficient to calm the public mind. The last, and perhaps the most important, service he rendered his country was, in establishing a well-chosen council of regency, which might keep in awe the factious, and sustain an unremitted action in the government. 1792.

In person, Gustavus the Third was of the middle size, and extremely ill-shaped. He was inclining to be corpulent, had large shoulders and hips, a long face, and very high complexion; his eyes were large and very lively; his forehead on the left side was flattened in a very singular manner; his nose pretty long and aquiline, and his teeth frightful: yet his countenance was open and animated, and taking the whole of his features collectively, he much resembled his uncle the great Frederick. Notwithstanding the blemishes of his figure, his politeness and affability rendered him one of the most pleasing men in his dominions,

1792. nions, though the Swedes are in general a sensible and engaging people. He possessed a lively imagination, and a mind enlightened and adorned by letters; he was master of a manly persuasive eloquence, and spoke readily, even in the French language; his acquirements were both of the useful and the agreeable kind; his memory was remarkably retentive; a thing very common in princes, and which seems almost like a sixth sense bestowed upon them by nature: his manners, which, as I have said, were polite and affable, had something in them singular, but not displeasing; his soul, ardent and vigorous, was inflamed by an immoderate love of glory, but under the dominion of the frank and generous spirit of chivalry. The sensibility of his heart rendered him merciful, when he ought, perhaps, to have been severe. He was ever susceptible of friendship, and I knew those who deservedly were honoured with the title of friend by that prince. He was in his disposition firm and determined, possessing that resolution so necessary in statesmen,

men, without which, parts, prudence, talents, and experience are not only useless, 1792. but frequently pernicious. It was to this quality, the most necessary ingredient in the character of a hero, that Gustavus was indebted for his safety under the great political emergencies of his reign.

This prince certainly had defects, some of them even of a ridiculous nature, not so easily pardoned in a sovereign as those vices which often unite with virtues in the composition of a hero; like poisons (says one of our most celebrated moralists) that make a part of medicines. Too much attached to pomp and pleasure, he did not always give that attention to his affairs which they required; and his negligence led him into an indolent confidence, which became a source of uneasiness to himself, and of many abuses in the state. Yet the energy of his character, and the superiority of his capacity, always shone conspicuous on great occasions, and particularly in the diets, of which, to use his own expression, he knew perfectly well the tactics. It is to these

1792,

these qualities, rather than to any military talents he or his generals possessed, that he was indebted for his brilliant success in the war with the Russians. Had the king of Sweden known how to improve the advantages he gained in his first campaign, and been less intimidated at the mutiny which broke out in the regiments of Finland, there is not a doubt but he would have entered Petersburg; on this latter occasion, his usual presence of mind seemed to desert him, though he quickly repaired this error by the resolution with which he acted. Thinking himself on the point of losing his crown, he quitted his army with Armfeldt and Wreden, but he was unexpectedly relieved by a declaration of war on the part of Denmark.

The natural hatred of the Swedes for the Danes, joined to a sense of the common danger, roused the courage of the people. The king proceeded to Dalecarlia, in which province he found the same fidelity that had procured the crown for Gustavus Vasa,

Yafa. Here he left Armfeldt to enrol the inhabitants, whilst himself repaired to Gottenburgh, as well to counteract, by his presence, the effects produced by the treachery of the commandant of that town, as to profit of the inaction of prince Charles of Hesse, general of the Danish army, whose operations were suspended in consequence of the intervention of the English minister at the court of Denmark. By this romantic step, however, the Swedish monarch preserved both his glory and his crown; it likewise furnished him with the means of continuing the war till he obtained an advantageous peace, by which Sweden was freed from the yoke imposed upon it by Russia, and the senate, to whom all the misfortunes of this prince may be attributed, was completely deprived of existence.

Gustavus possessed great courage and activity, of which the circumstance I have just cited is a most striking proof. The unhappy

1792. happy situation of France would have afforded him fresh opportunities of displaying these qualities, as well as the chivalrous cast of his character. His own interest, as well as his attachment to France, led him to wish for a leading part in the troubles with which that country was agitated; and there is no doubt, but in him the unhappy Louis would have found a powerful friend, and the adherents to his cause an active supporter.

The empress of Russia saw, with satisfaction, his Swedish majesty stand forth the champion of the French monarchy; and had even excited him to do so; but it is much to be doubted, whether the other sovereigns of Europe would have permitted him to take so active a part in the affairs of France. Leopold, who wished to terminate our revolution by a congress, of which himself was to be the head, would probably have prevented the Swedish monarch from receiving those supplies of money, without which

which he could undertake nothing: I even question, whether he was so sure of the empress herself as he affected to appear. 1792.

The extremes of courage and weakness are frequently found united. Scipio had great faith in dreams: Cæsar looked forward with terror to the ides of March: it is said, that even the great Frederic himself consulted the conjuring tribe; and Gustavus was not without this spirit of superstition. He had always dreaded the month of March, and the first word he said to Armfeldt, on finding himself wounded, was to remind him of the circumstance. A few days before he set out for the diet at Gesslé, he went to consult a sorceress named Harvifson. This woman having warned him against the month of March and red coats, added, "Beware of the first person you shall meet on leaving my house; from him you have every thing to dread." On going out, the first object that met his eye was baron de Ribbing, one of the chief conspirators; and this singular circumstance caused

1792.

caused him, when he received his wound, to name the baron.

Notwithstanding the defects of this prince, (and defects ever accompany distinguished qualities, to which, without obscuring them, they serve as a shade,) had he been placed on a more extensive theatre, I have no difficulty in asserting, that Gustavus would have been a great monarch, perhaps superior to Louis the Fourteenth, whose manners and grandeur he affected, and whose pomp and ceremony he imitated; but what in France was useful, and even necessary, in Sweden was misplaced and ridiculous. Had the Swedish monarch been born to the brilliant throne of France, he would incontestably have been one of the greatest kings that ever filled it; he would have secured his country from a revolution, and would have reigned with glory and splendour; he would have died peaceably, lamented and revered by his subjects, esteemed and admired by all Europe.

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On the contrary, had Louis the Sixteenth been born sovereign of the Swedish nation, his moral and religious virtues would have secured him the esteem and respect of that simple people, while his economy, his justice, and the philanthropy of his character, would have gained him their affection. He would have constituted their happiness while living, and when dead they would have wept over his tomb. But it was otherwise decreed, and both fell by the parricide hands of their own subjects. Unsearchable are the ways of Providence; and all that remains for man is to adore and to obey in silence!

As soon as I was informed of the death of the king of Sweden, I quitted the service of that power. I had, as it were, connected my fate with that of two sovereigns equally unhappy, and henceforward I resolved to form no new attachment, but to secure myself from the frowns of Fortune by no longer troubling her; to secure my independence, preferring tranquillity and

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1792.

a moderate competency, to all the alluring but uncertain hopes held out by the fickle goddess.

In the month of April, the French declared war against the emperor, but not against the empire, which, however, shortly after imitated their example. The conduct of the French on this occasion was impolitic. They might at that time have easily invaded the electorates of the Rhine, and the emperor's hereditary estates situated on that river; they might have made themselves masters of several strong places which were then defenceless, and by this means, not only have kept the enemy at a distance from their frontier, but likewise have procured resources for carrying on the war.

The French armies were then commanded by timid generals, the principal of whom were Rochambeau, La Fayette, and Luckner; under these were others at that time little known, nor have they since risen to any degree of eminence. Dumourier

was

was not then employed in the army: at this time, he was secretary of state for foreign affairs; he came, however, shortly after to supersede Rochambeau, whose lieutenants, at the opening of the campaign, and when the French entered the Low Countries, had been beaten by a handful of Austrians.

1792.

La Fayette, who commanded on the Sambre, the Meuse, and the Moselle, met with no check, it is true, but obtained no success; the consequence of his great circumspection, both as a general and a politician. Wishing, however, when too late, to ward off the last blow aimed by the Jacobins against royalty, he fell, abandoned by his army, and narrowly escaped becoming the victim of that faction, whose projects he had favoured by his imprudence, and whose strength he had suffered to increase through the timidity of his policy. Accompanied by his staff, he came for refuge into a foreign country, but there, instead of an asylum, he found a prison. Thus, La Fayette, one of the principals in

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1792. the revolution, the defender of liberty, and the man who had succeeded me in the command of my army, like myself, and for the same reasons, the same exertions in favour of the king and monarchy, was obliged to desert and fly his country. Dumourier, who was appointed general in his stead, notwithstanding his successes, his distinguished abilities, and his services in the revolution, notwithstanding his attachment to the party of Orleans, and his constant co-operation with the Jacobins, the following year experienced a similar fortune. Such is the lot of leaders of parties in almost every revolution; alternately persecutors, persecuted, and proscribed.

About this time I received a letter from the king of Prussia, requesting me to be at Magdeburg by the 27th of May, in order to explain some particulars relative to the plan of operations for the combined armies of Austria, Prussia, and the empire, destined to act against France the same summer: these armies were to be commanded by the
duke

duke of Brunswick, then esteemed the first general in Europe.

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On my arrival at Magdeburg, I had several conferences with this commander, in presence of his Prussian majesty. I pointed out Champagne as the weakest part of the French frontier, and recommended that the attack should be first made upon Longwy, Sedan, and Verdun, from which little resistance was to be apprehended, as they were extremely weak, though the only places that covered that part of the kingdom. Having gained possession of these towns, the combined armies might march straight to Paris by way of Rethel and Rheims, across fertile plains, which presented no obstacles. Should they, however, fail in their project of penetrating to the capital, they would find no difficulty in gaining possession of Montmedi and Mezières, places situated in the Meuse, between which river and the Chiers they might establish their winter quarters; in this case, their front would be covered by

1792.

the Meuse and by the towns of Sedan and Mezières; their left by the Chiers, Longwy, and Montmedi; while Luxembourg would have been their point of support, and military repository. Upper Alsace I likewise mentioned as one of the weakest parts of the frontier.

The duke of Brunswick was perfectly of my opinion, observing that an attack might be made in either of the directions I had pointed out, with probability of success. The plan he determined upon was to enter Champagne with the greater part of his forces, and to act offensively in that quarter, leaving corps of observation in Flanders, and on the Upper Rhine. It was agreed between the emperor and the king of Prussia, that the emigrants should not accompany the army that entered France, but should be assembled on the right bank of the Rhine.

Comprising some regiments lately levied by the princes in Germany, they might
compose

compose an army of twenty thousand men. This I proposed to the king of Prussia, and the duke of Brunswick, to divide into three bodies; one of which, consisting of ten thousand men under the command of the king's brothers, should be attached to the main army; while the other two, of five thousand men each, commanded by the prince de Condé and the duke de Bourbon, should be employed with the corps of observation in Flanders, and on the Upper Rhine. The principal object of this disposition was to draw French deserters from different parts of the frontier. It was approved and adopted by the king of Prussia, who took a lively interest in the affairs of the princes, and even sent them a very considerable sum of money: he expressed likewise an anxious desire to serve the king of France. The mode by which he proposed re-establishing the monarchy and restoring tranquillity to the kingdom, was by putting Louis the Sixteenth in a condition to treat, himself, with the party which still wished for a monarchical government.

1792.

Dumourier having sent one of his friends, named Benoit, to Berlin for the purpose of persuading his Prussian majesty either to renounce the coalition he had engaged in, or at least to defer his operations, this man was dismissed without hearing his proposals. Baron de Bischoffwerder, who then enjoyed the full confidence of the king of Prussia, happening to mention this circumstance to me in presence of that sovereign and the duke of Brunswick, I observed that it might not be unadvisable to renew this negotiation, as it might probably lead to an arrangement agreeable to all parties. I am inclined to think that it was renewed, and that Dumourier, in the course of the following campaign, shewed himself as able a negotiator as he was a skilful general. At that time I was not acquainted with all the wickedness of the ruling men in France, and I had equally miscalculated its resources.

Having remained some days at Magdeburg, I returned to Mayence, at which town, not long after, an interview took place

place between the emperor and the king of Prussia; the latter monarch was declared chief of this Germanic confederacy, for several of the princes of Germany were engaged in the league against France, and among others the ecclesiastical electors, the landgrave of Hesse Cassel, and some of the petty sovereigns on the Rhine. 1792.

The emperor now repaired to Frankfort for his coronation; and in the month of July, the Prussian army assembled on the right bank of the Rhine, between Coblentz and Mayence. Soon after, his Prussian majesty arrived in the former of these towns, and there established his head quarters.

Through the medium of the duke of Brunswick he offered me the command of six thousand troops, furnished by the town of Mayence and the prince of Hesse Darmstadt his brother-in-law: pecuniary difficulties, however, prevented this arrangement from taking place; the latter

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troops

1792.

troops were not employed, nor was I, as a commander: I served as a volunteer under the prince de Condé, who had inspired me with much esteem and confidence.

The campaign commencing about the beginning of August, Longwy and Verdun fell almost as soon as the combined army, which consisted of near eighty thousand men, appeared before them. Why Sedan was not attacked I have never been able to learn; it certainly was a place of much more importance than the last of those two towns, nor was it capable of making any greater resistance. Why did not the allied army take this road for the purpose of crossing Champagne? Why did it waste so much time before Thionville? In this town the emigrants pretended to have friends, but if it was so, they should at least have seconded their efforts by a regular and formidable attack. But I shall proceed no farther in my remarks on this campaign; nor shall I explain the causes
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of its unsuccessful termination; they were like many of those which have brought about the greatest events, very small in themselves. It is not the first time that the little intrigues of a court have deranged the most important political plans. But if the truth were displayed in its full light, it would offend the eyes of most of those who should behold it. It is the business of time to soften its rays so as to render them more tolerable. Here then I shall close my Memoirs, which can no longer be very interesting, as I ceased to take an active part in the events which afterwards happened, and have since remained only one in the crowd of spectators. 1792.

Whether what I have here related is of sufficient importance to interest, I am ignorant. I hope, at least, that I have justified myself from the atrocious calumnies with which I have been loaded, and this was my only object in writing these pages. I by no means wish to excuse my political conduct, in which certainly will be discovered many errors,

1792.

errors, the effect of false calculations and imprudent steps, and not unfrequently of a warm temper, and prepossessions not sufficiently restrained.

"Nature expelled, returns full speed,"

was a saying of one of our poets, whose name I have forgot, but I have fully experienced the truth of the maxim. Were I again to find myself in situations so critical and extraordinary, I would preserve a conduct in many respects different, without however deviating from the moral principles by which I was governed, and which, I am persuaded, will be found unexceptionable.

Though I entertain the highest respect and veneration for the virtues of Louis the Sixteenth, and most sincerely sympathise in his misfortunes, it was not to his person alone that I devoted myself, but to the king of France, and the French monarchy. A monarchical form of government

1792.

ment I thought best adapted to a great people; and the character of the French, I was of opinion, required a great latitude of authority in the sovereign. I feared that the least alteration in the principles of this ancient monarchy, corrupted as they might be, would endanger the whole fabric; whatever vices and abuses had been introduced into the government, I wished might be corrected by the royal authority alone. I hoped that some minister would at length arise, perhaps even the sovereign himself, who would undertake the task of reformation, in which, if possessed of the necessary abilities, he would the more easily succeed, as its necessity was universally felt. Should a popular assembly take into their hands the sovereign power, I foresaw the most melancholy consequences, as they could hardly fail to make an improper use of it. Lastly, I was apprehensive that if the king for a moment suffered his sceptre to escape from his hands, bad men, strong by their crimes and audacity, would seize and

1792.

and employ it to the destruction of the monarch himself, and that it would afterwards be found very difficult to recover it from their grasp; a fear, unhappily, too well verified by the event! My attachment then to the king and the monarchy was the result of reasoning, and was founded upon principles which I may venture to call rational; and they formed the basis of my conduct during the whole time that I took an active part in the revolution. However, though justified from the crimes which have been imputed to me, I have committed errors which I now recognise, with which I have not been reproached, yet which had a considerable influence on events. For a short time I had at my disposal a large military force; in the provinces of which I was *commandant* in 1790, I possessed real influence. Had I then followed my first impulse, had I felt less repugnance for a civil war, I might perhaps have saved the monarchy. The scruples, the facility, the humanity of the king subdued

subdued me, even at the time when I 1792.
was most apprehensive of his want of
firmness. I ought to have opposed it by
decisive considerations, perhaps even it
was my duty to disobey his orders. Too
great a deference to the aristocratical
party perhaps restrained me from putting
myself at the head of those who wished
for a change in the constitution, the only
thing that could preserve in France a
monarchical government. For, this ter-
rible revolution once begun, I never was
of the opinion of those who imagined that
things might be re-established on the for-
mer footing; or that any thing remained,
except to modify and make a compromise
with it. On this head at least I have
always been consistent. I was at first an
enemy to all innovation; but when these
innovations were actually made, and in
compliance with the king's request I had
sworn to obey the new laws, I then di-
rected my efforts solely against the fac-
tions, and the Jacobins, who, not contented
with the mischief already occasioned by
their

1792. their constitution, aimed at the total sub-
version of the monarchy, and of all social
order. As then France was governed
entirely by these men, from the year 1792
till the death of Robespierre, I desired
nothing more than to be able to extirpate
them. Since this period, however, the
hope of still succeeding by conciliatory
means has come again to cheer my heart,
and has influenced my conduct in the
little connection I have maintained with
our princes, with foreign powers, their
generals, and their ministers. Whatever
faults I have committed, may they prove
a useful lesson to those who, having
preserved equal fidelity to their sovereign,
and attachment to their country, shall, in
circumstances nearly similar, (and these
may happen elsewhere than in France,)
possess the same inclination to serve both.
May they, superior to me in fortune and
abilities, succeed in their generous under-
taking!

Of the motives by which I have been
actuated in giving my opinion of the

men who ruled in France immediately preceding the revolution, and those who had an active part in that event, it is for the enlightened readers of these Memoirs to judge. I have endeavoured to avoid all personality, harbouring in my heart none of those emotions of hatred or jealousy, which, fostered by ambition, become extinguished together with it. Many who were concerned in these great events are dead; consequently the judgment of their political conduct belongs to posterity; and it must be the more just and impartial, as they can no longer either repair their faults, or destroy the good they have done. With respect to those who are still living, the case is not the same; their conduct and principles may change. How many instances do we meet with in history, of men truly great and virtuous at the commencement of their career, despicable and abandoned at the close of it! Others, on the contrary, who have begun their course with crimes, have concluded it with virtues. Sylla, returning,

1792. returning, at the head of his victorious army, to deliver Rome from the cruel yoke of Marius, is a great man; Sylla, when dictator, is a tyrant; the same Sylla abdicating the sovereign power, and returning to a private condition, is a philosopher and a sage. Death alone puts the seal on all our actions, and determines the reputation of those men who have acted a conspicuous part on the theatre of the world. Thus, when I displayed the conduct of M. de Maurepas, cardinal de Loménie, and the duke d'Orleans, I thought myself at liberty likewise to draw their characters; their features, now fixed in the public mind, are henceforth not to be effaced. May the hideous spectre of the latter present itself to the view of those men who, placed by their birth, dignities, and riches, in the first rank of a state, instead of being its supporters, join in the factions by which it is distracted, hoping to make them the instruments of their own ambitious designs! Let them imagine they see the ghost of
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the parricide Orleans, and hear the monster thus announce himself: " I am that
" duke d'Orleans who conspired against
" the life of my sovereign and the head
" of my family. I possessed by birth all
" the blessings nature and fortune could
" bestow ; yet, blinded by ambition, and
" impelled by a desire of revenge, I
" became the tool of men, as bad, but
" more artful than myself, and embued
" my hands in the blood of him I ought
" to have served and protected. I then
" wished to place the crown upon my
" own head ; but after having overturned
" the throne, after having deluged my
" country with crimes and blood, I fell
" myself ignominiously, by the hands of
" those very wretches who had been the
" instruments, and now turned the avengers
" of my misdeeds : to my children I have
" left nothing but a name they will be
" ashamed to bear ; a name which will
" be execrated by future generations, and
" will serve only to express the combination of every vice. Such was my

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" fate,

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“ fate, and such will be the fate of all those
“ who, like me, shall employ the mask of
“ patriotism to attempt the destruction of
“ their sovereign and their country.”

If I am thus and so justly severe in censuring the duke d'Orleans, and if nearly a similar judgment may be passed on other inferior criminals, who, after having contributed to the misfortunes of France, were hurried off the stage by a premature death; ought we not to separate La Fayette from these abandoned characters? Brought up in the school of the American revolution, is he not to be excused for having yielded to that enthusiastic love of liberty with which his bosom was influenced during six years which he passed with the celebrated Washington? Let us for a moment form to ourselves the idea of a young man, to whom nature has given a warm heart, an elevated and feeling soul, by which impressions are easily received and long retained, a solid understanding, formed to reflect and calculate

culate on what it receives; with such qualities transport him into the midst of a people fighting for their liberty: here let him remain several years fighting along with them, and in some measure sharing their triumphs and success: the struggle over, loaded with the most flattering praises, he returns to his native country, to the centre of a corrupted court; at the moment when the germs of a great revolution are about to burst forth, the people seeming no longer disposed to suffer absolute authority in the monarch, but insisting on a form of government by which they supposed their condition would be ameliorated: must not such a person feel a wish to take an active part in this revolution, and be disposed to regard it in the most favourable point of view, as calculated to promote the general happiness? Should the people select him for one of their chiefs, will he not defend their cause zealously and even enthusiastically? Missed by his opinions, we may certainly

1792. blame his political conduct; yet if he violates no principle of morality, but though surrounded with crimes preserves himself free from guilt; if, perceiving his error, he renounces it, sacrifices his ambition, and submits to proscription and exile; if, to repair his fault, he makes a last effort in favour of the monarch and monarchy his fanaticism had led him to attack; and if, lastly, he expiates, by a long captivity, these his faults and deviations, is he not entitled to our sympathy and compassion, at least to our indulgence? Ought not every sentiment of hatred or revenge to be suppressed, particularly if now, arrived at years of maturity, he has it in his power still to repair the errors of his youth? Such, however, was La Fayette; such was his situation; such his conduct; and such, perhaps, one day, will be his destiny.

But what judgment are we to pronounce on M. Neckar? How shall we remove

move the impression made on us by the disasters he was instrumental in occasioning, since they must in a great measure be attributed to the imprudence of his measures, the weakness of his character, the insufficiency of his knowledge, and his false application of the principles of philosophy to the affairs of a state? I shall not join with those who accuse M. Neckar of sedition and conspiracy, and charge him with having betrayed the sovereign and the nation; but I will say, that to both he proved a very bad servant. His moral and social virtues I shall not call in question, nor will I deny that he possessed abilities sufficient to preside at the head of the finances in ordinary circumstances: but what a change had taken place, between the period of his first ministry, and that when he afterwards ventured to take the reins of government! If, as he acknowledges he did, he foresaw the revolution, what steps did he take to prevent it, to modify it, or to direct it?

1792.

If he placed so much reliance on his own powers, and on the public esteem, of which he supposed himself possessed, why did not he combat with greater vigour and address the errors of public opinion? Why did he even submit to them contrary to the dictates of his own conscience? If in circumstances so difficult, destitute either of courage or foresight, he could bring nothing to sustain a tottering throne but empty speculations, sounding periods, and a lofty confident air, is he not culpable for having undertaken such an arduous task; thus contributing, at least passively, to the demolition of the monarchy; and then writing the history of the event, and annexing to it his own panegyric? Let him then boast no more of his talents and capacity; were they much greater than they are, still they would be contemptible in the eyes of the truly wise, who estimate the merits of men by the services they render society, and prefer an expert artisan to a minister of state who is un-

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1792.

qualified for his office. Providence has dispensed to mortals the talents, or rather the moral and physical powers requisite to exercise the different employments by which social order exists, and the common happiness is promoted. The lot of the multitude is to be guided by a few; and experience has shewn that the less numerous their leaders, the better a people is governed. Nature likewise seldom forms those great and sublime geniuses capable of presiding over, of defending and enlightening extensive empires. We see very few great monarchs, very few great generals, and perhaps still fewer great ministers: distinguished talents are distributed with a very sparing hand, and even then require great occasions to draw them into action. These occasions were not wanting to Neckar, but he shewed himself unequal to the emergency. His cast of understanding, his financiering abilities, the morality of his character, and his inclination for literature, all shew that Neckar was destined to be only a happy

1792.

man in private life; as I undoubtedly was intended for a soldier, and an indifferent general. Why then would he aspire to the character of a great statesman, when nature had refused him the necessary talents? Let him cease to think of governing men, as I have abandoned the idea of again leading them to battle: and as I continually exclaim, O the vanity of martial glory! let him accustom himself to repeat, O the vanity of ministerial sway!

To conclude:—If I may still be permitted to cast a sorrowing look on my native country, and to offer up one wish in her favour, it is, that she may never be governed by pretended philosophers, but that in her rulers she may ever find a Titus, a Trajan, a Marcus Aurelius, a Louis the Twelfth, and a Henry the Fourth; the philosophy and morality of whom consisted not in speculation but in practice. Ye modern philosophers, or rather ye wretched sophists, the doctrines you have propagated. by their false splendour have been

been the cause of more crimes, and have occasioned the effusion of more blood, 1792. within an inconsiderable number of years, than the barbarous policy, the ignorance, and fanaticism of our forefathers during several centuries. How will you repair the mischief you have given birth to, unless by confessing your faults and acknowledging your errors, that they may remain a terrible but salutary lesson to future generations!



I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th inst. and in reply to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the proper authorities for their consideration. I am, Sir, very respectfully,
 Yours, etc.,
 J. H. [Signature]

A P P E N D I X.

No. I.

*Lettre de Monf. le Marquis DE BOUILLÉ
à Monf. le Marquis DU CHASTELET.*

Metz, ce 1789.

Je vous demande pardon, monsieur, de n'avoir pas répondu plutôt à votre lettre; mais l'objet qu'elle renfermoit est d'une telle importance qu'il exigeoit une mûre réflexion avant que d'y répondre. Je vous crois un homme honnête et loyal, ainsi je vous parlerai avec confiance.

Il y a long tems que je gemis sur les maux qui affligent ma patrie, et il y a long tems que je les avois prévus; vous n'en douterez pas si vous vous rappelez quelques unes de nos conversations cet hyver, et quoique aussi ennemi du despotisme que vous, que M. de la Fayette lui-même, je redoutois le désordre
et

et l'anarchie qui devoient résulter de la composition des états-généraux, parmi lesquels l'esprit public ne pouvoit régner. Mes craintes se sont réalisées; le royaume est entraîné vers sa ruine; la réunion des gens honnêtes, puissans, et courageux, peut le sauver peut-être encore; mais du moins ils doivent faire un dernier effort. Tel est le principe qui guidera ma conduite dans cette malheureuse circonstance. Qu'il se présente donc des hommes qui, avec des intentions pures et droites, ayent la force et le courage nécessaire, je me joindrai à eux; s'ils succombent, je succomberai avec eux.

J'ai jugé depuis quelque tems que M. le duc d'Orleans et M. de la Fayette tenoient dans leurs mains la destinée de la France; je croyois que le premier, par son rang et par sa naissance, devoit en désirer la conservation et le bonheur; sa conduite, éclairée par les derniers évènemens, m'a détrompé, et m'a convaincu, qu'il n'y avoit plus aucun bien à en attendre; il reste donc M. de la Fayette, dont la puissance est encore accrue. Je ne connois pas ses principes; mais qu'il me les fasse connoître, et s'ils sont tels que vous me les annoncez, et tels que je le désire, je me réunirai à lui pour sauver la patrie, et mettant à l'écart l'ambition, l'intérêt particulier, l'amour propre même, il pourra
compter,

compter, ainsi que toutes les personnes qui auront ce grand objet en vuë, sur mon courage, sur mon dévouement à la chose publique, ainsi que sur ma fidélité à remplir mes engagemens.

Mais encore une fois, si je ne veux pas le retour du pouvoir arbitraire sous lequel je suis né, et sous lequel j'ai vécu jusqu'ici, je ne veux pas le désordre et l'anarchie qui regnent à present; je veux vivre sous un gouvernement qui puisse en même tems procurer la sûreté au dehors et la tranquillité au dedans, dont la liberté soit conséquemment circonscrite dans des bornes raisonnables; ce qui étoit possible, il y a quelques mois: ce qui l'est peut-être encore.

Voilà, monsieur, ma profession de foi; vous pouvez la communiquer à M. de la Fayette; si sa façon de penser est conforme à la mienne, s'il veut me l'expliquer avec cette franchise qui doit nous caractériser l'un et l'autre, nous serons bientôt réunis, et mettant à nos pieds tous les petits préjugés qui nous éloignoient, nous concourrons au même but, avec l'accord qui doit exister entre deux hommes également animés du bien public, et dont la seule ambition doit être de sauver la patrie en danger; ma conduite relativement à M. de la Fayette, fera donc calculée sur la sienne, je vous prie de l'en prévenir.

Recevez,

Recevez, mon sieur, les assurances du très inviolable attachement, avec lequel j'ai l'honneur d'être votre très humble et très obéissant serviteur,

Le Marquis DE BOUILLÉ.

No. II.

Lettre de Monf. DE LA FAYETTE à Monf. le Marquis DE BOUILLÉ.

Paris, ce 14 Novembre 1789.

* * * * *

Voilà, mon cher cousin, pour les affaires particulières; mais il en est une générale, qui intéresse, qui doit réunir tous les bons citoyens, quelles qu'aient été leurs opinions politiques; nous aimions l'un et l'autre la liberté, il m'en falloit une plus forte doze qu'à vous, et je la voulois pour le peuple et avec le peuple; cette révolution est faite, et vous devez en être d'autant moins fâché que vous n'avez voulu y prendre aucune part; mais aujourd'hui nous craignons les mêmes maux, l'anarchie, les dissensions civiles; la dissolution de toutes les forces publiques: nous souhaitons les mêmes biens, le rétablissement du crédit, l'affermissement d'une liberté constitutionnelle, le retour de l'ordre, et une

une forte mesure de pouvoir exécutif. Une contre révolution étant heureusement impossible, et devenant d'ailleurs criminelle, puisqu'elle assureroit la guerre civile, et quoiqu'on put faire le massacre du parti foible ; les honnêtes gens, les citoyens purs ne peuvent chercher qu'à remonter la machine dans le sens de la révolution : le roi est pénétré de cette vérité ; il faut, ce me semble, que tous les hommes forts s'en pénètrent ; l'assemblée nationale, après avoir détruit à Versailles, vient édifier à Paris, elle sera d'autant plus raisonnable qu'on aura dissipé tout prétexte de méfiance, et plus vous, mon cher cousin, ferez rallié à la nouvelle constitution, plus vous aurez de moyens de servir la chose publique.

Quant à moi, que les circonstances et la confiance du peuple ont placé dans un degré de responsabilité fort supérieur à mes talens, je crois avoir démontré que je hais la faction autant que j'aime la liberté, et j'attends impatiemment l'époque où je pourrai démontrer aussi que nulle vue d'intérêt personnel n'a jamais approché de mon cœur ; je vous l'ai ouvert avec confiance, mon cher cousin ; il saisit avec empressement toutes les phrases de vos lettres qui le rapprochent de vous, et souhaite bien savoir si celle-ci a votre approbation. Bon jour, mon cher cousin.

LA FAYETTE.

Mille

Mille tendre complimens à votre fils. Je vous ai écrit un mot, que je crains avoir été égaré.

No. III.

Lettre de Monf. DE LA FAYETTE à Monf. le
Marquis DE BOVILLÉ.

Paris, ce 9 Fevrier 1790.

PARDONNEZ, mon cher cousin, à mon inexactitude, mais ne doutez pas du plaisir que j'ai eu en apprenant que vous approuvez ma conduite ; nous avons été divisés de principes et de sentimens pendant la révolution, mais aujourd'hui nous devons tous nous rallier autour du roi, pour l'affermissement d'une constitution que vous aimez moins que moi, qui peut avoir quelques défauts, mais qui assure la liberté publique, et qui est trop avancée dans l'esprit et le cœur des François pour que ses ennemis pussent l'attaquer sans dissoudre la monarchie ; lorsqu'on en est à ce point, tous les honnêtes gens ne forment plus qu'un parti, dont le roi s'est déclaré le chef, et qui, déconcertant à la fois les anciens regrets et les espérances factieuses, doit resserrer les liens de l'ordre public, et ramener par tout l'union et le calme,
pour

pour nous faire mieux jouir de la liberté ; le cœur du roi doit se reposer délicieusement sur le bien qu'il a fait, et particulièrement sur les maux qu'il a évités, et dans lesquels un monarque ambitieux ou insensible auroit pu plonger la France ; donnons lui la récompense de ses vertus, en nous unissant tous pour ramener la tranquillité : celle de Metz à été troublée par quelques discussions, dont on vouloit retarder les travaux de l'assemblée nationale ; il vaut bien mieux n'en pas parler, et je vous conjure d'arranger cette affaire à la satisfaction générale ; il vous est si facile de contenter les citoyens de Metz, de communiquer aux officiers ces dispositions, que vous pourriez donner l'exemple de cette réunion cordiale sans indiscipline tandis qu'ailleurs, on n'a souvent obtenu l'une qu'aux dépends de l'autre. Vous sentirez aussi que la meilleure manière d'assurer au roi l'autorité constitutionnelle dont nous avons besoin, est de satisfaire les amis de la liberté sur la parfaite concordance de tous les agens du pouvoir exécutif avec les principes du roi. J'ai appris que vous aviez donné l'idée de quitter votre patrie, comme si vos talens ne lui appartenoient pas, comme si même quelques torts particuliers auroient pu vous donner le désir de nous voler les batailles que vous gagnerez pour nous, et dans lesquelles j'espère que vous me permettrez de combattre sous

M M

VOS

vos ordres. Je me flatte, mon cher cousin, que mon caractère vous est assez connu, pour qu'il soit inutile de dire que la révolution me reposera justement à la même place où elle m'a pris; quelque extraordinaires que soient mes aventures, il le seroit encore plus à mes yeux d'en profiter, et j'aime à prendre cet engagement à l'époque où il ne peut plus avoir l'air d'un marché; je souhaite bien, mon cher cousin, que vous saisissiez les occasions d'en prendre avec la constitution. Il est impossible que vos talens n'excitent pas la jalousie; que vos anciennes idées ne fournissent, soit des occasions, soit des prétextes à l'inquiétude; il est peut-être utile à la chose publique de vous manifester bien clairement sur ce point. La démarche du roi est une occasion: je voudrois que lorsqu'on dit—M. de Bouillé a les plus grands talens et la confiance des troupes, personne n'ajoutât; il est l'ennemi de nos principes. Pardonnez ma franchise, mon cher cousin: je ne fais que répéter ce qu'on m'a dit vingt fois depuis trois jours, et j'ai besoin de ne plus entendre ce reproche contre vous. Bon jour, mon cher cousin, agréez mon tendre attachement.

LA FAYETTE.

No. IV.

Lettre du Roi à Monf. le Marquis DE BOUILLÉ.

Paris, ce 23 Avril 1790.

IL m'a été rendu exactement compte, monsieur, de vos efforts pour maintenir la garnison importante de ma ville de Metz, et des succès que vos soins avoient obtenus jusqu'à ce moment ; ce qui vient de se passer dans cette place n'a fait qu'augmenter la bonne opinion que j'ai de vous depuis long tems, et je me plais à vous en témoigner ma satisfaction ; continuez à me bien servir dans votre commandement ; M. de la Tour du Pin vous expliquera les motifs qui pourroient faire appercevoir de la convenance à ce que vous vinssiez passer quelques jours à Paris ; mais je m'en rapporte absolument à vous pour juger du moment où vous pourriez le faire sans que votre absence put causer aucun inconvenient.

LOUIS.

No. V.

Lettre du Roi à Monf. le Marquis DE BOUILLE.

Paris, ce 2 Mai 1790.

Je remarque dans votre lettre, monsieur, une phrase qui me fait beaucoup de peine ; je ne veux pas que vous quittiez ni ma personne ni mon royaume, car je fais pas les services que vous m'avez rendus, tous ceux que vous pouvez rendre encore à l'état. Soyez sur de ma constante reconnoissance, et c'est uniquement pour ménager la noblesse et la délicatesse de votre caractère que je ne vous en entretiens pas plus particulièrement en cette occasion. Je suis très satisfait de vos dispositions pour la journée du 4, et j'aime à vous voir partager les sentimens que la constitution nouvelle doivent inspirer à tous les bons citoyens et à mes fidèles serviteurs.

LOUIS.

No. VI.

*Lettre de Monf. DE LA FAYETTE à Monf. le
Marquis DE BOUILLÉ.*

Ce Lundi (sans autre date).

JE fais, mon cher cousin, qu'on a cherché à me nuire auprès de vous; mais avec un cœur pur et droit comme le vôtre, la loyauté n'est pas long tems méconnue, et l'amitié est également sûre de se faire entendre.

On vous a dit beaucoup d'absurdités sur mes vûes, mes moyens, mes désirs; il est simple que des ambitieux cherchent ce que cache un homme, qui en pouvant beaucoup n'a voulu que le bien public.

On a fait des tracasseries personnelles entre nous; cela est naturel aussi, parceque j'ai des envieux, que je me suis fait des ennemis, et que j'ai méconté beaucoup de gens, de manière qu'en obtenant l'estime de la nation, j'ai mérité la haine des partis.

On a beaucoup blâmé ma conduite, tantôt on a eu tort; et tantôt raison; les reproches qu'on m'a faits se contredisent, et je pourrais

en profiter pour ma défense : mais en jugeant sévèrement mes fautes, je m'honore de mes intentions, et si d'autres eussent mieux fait, personne n'eut agi plus en conscience.

Au reste, mon cher cousin, quand vous croirez avoir à me gronder, adressez-vous à moi ; nos caractères ne sont pas les mêmes ; nos principes politiques diffèrent aussi ; mais nous sommes deux honnêtes gens, et comme ils sont très rares, nous nous entendrons mieux seuls, que quand d'autres s'en mêlent.

Je vous dirai avec la même franchise, que la nouvelle promesse demandée aux officiers est une assez mauvaise mesure ; mais il a fallu parer d'abord à la fureur du licentierement, qui se répandoit d'un bout du royaume à l'autre ; faire agréer le système des camps, rendre l'engagement des officiers commun à tous les fonctionnaires publics, et après tout cela, est restée une formule de promesse qui n'est pas particulièrement déplaisante à l'armée, puisqu'elle s'étend à tous les états, mais qui en elle-même ne convient pas à la dignité du peuple François, ni à la lassitude où nous devrions être des sermens.

Mais comme l'assemblée, bien loin de vouloir choquer les officiers, a surtout été conduite

duite par le désir de leur offrir un moyen qui, une fois pour toutes, imposât silence à la calomnie, et détruisît tout prétexte à l'insubordination, nous comptons sur votre patriotisme, mon cher cousin, pour éviter les mauvaises interprétations qu'on cherchera peut-être à donner, et sur votre exemple, pour réunir tous les officiers dans la disposition que les bons citoyens souhaitent ardemment, tandis que les brouillons de tous les partis ne demanderoient pas mieux que de leur donner de l'humeur.

Mon ami *Emeri* vous écrit ; il avoit besoin de moi auprès de vous. J'ai peur à présent, d'avoir besoin de lui ; mais je ne craindrai rien, si vous rendez justice à mon tendre attachement,

LA FAYETTE.

No. VII.

Lettre du Roi à Monf. le Marquis de Bouillé.

St. Cloud, ce 20 Août 1790.

Vous avez donné, monsieur, une nouvelle preuve de votre zèle, et des sentimens qui vous animent, en ne profitant pas du congé que je vous avois envoyé, dans les circonstances

où vous l'avez reçu. J'ai appris avec une véritable peine les dangers auxquels vous a exposé la prolongation de votre séjour à Metz; je n'ai point été surpris de la fermeté dont vous avez donné de nouvelles preuves dans cette occasion, mais j'ai du plaisir à vous témoigner ma reconnaissance, et ma satisfaction de votre conduite.

LOUIS.

No. VIII,

*Lettre de Monf. DE LA FAYETTE à Monf. le
Marquis DE BOUILLÉ.*

(Sans date.)

Vous avez appris, mon cher cousin, le décret unanime de l'assemblée nationale sur l'insurrection de Nanci. M. de la Tour du Pin vous adresse les ordres du roi. *Desmottes*, qui en est porteur, vous donnera les détails qui pourroient vous intéresser; je ne vous dirai donc que quelques mots. Voici le moment, mon cher cousin, où nous pouvons commencer l'établissement de l'ordre constitutionnel, qui doit remplacer l'anarchie révolutionnaire: les départemens entrent en fonction; l'ordre judiciaire, quoique

quoique défectueux, va s'organiser : nous sommes au moment de faire le travail des gardes nationales ; l'armée se décrète à l'instant où je vous écris, et déjà le roi a pu choisir son premier général pour commander la plus importante des quatre armées. Ne nous décourageons donc pas, mon cher cousin ; et espérons qu'en nous unissant de toutes nos forces pour l'établissement de la constitution, en nous roidissant contre toutes les difficultés intérieures et étrangères, nous assurerons à la fois la liberté et l'ordre public.

“ Le décret sur Nanci est bon, l'exécution doit être entière et rigoureuse ; aussitôt que nous l'eumes voté, le roi la sanctionné. M. de la Tour du Pin a annoncé à tous les membres de l'assemblée que M. de Malfeigne l'exécuteroit, et après avoir proclamé ce choix fort agréable à l'assemblée, il a découvert que M. de Malfeigne étoit à Besançon. J'ai reçu cette nuit un billet du roi pour m'entendre avec vous, pour voir M. de la Tour du Pin, et écrire aux gardes nationales ; il m'a paru, qu'excepté l'envoi du décret, il n'y avoit rien de fait. Un courier a donné ordre à M. de Malfeigne d'aller attendre à Lunéville vos instructions ; j'écris, non pas officiellement, mais fraternellement, aux gardes nationales des quatre départmens, et ma lettre est portée à Epinal par un de mes aides-de-camp, qui ira attendre vos ordres à Lunéville. On vous rendra compte à Mètz de ce qu'il

qu'il aura fait; nous avons arrêté ici la députation du regiment du roi, et nous vous écrirons demain au soir par Gouvernet qui ira vous joindre.

Il me semble, mon cher cousin, que nous devons frapper un coup imposant pour toute l'armée, et arrêter par un exemple sévère le débandement général qui se prépare. Si M. de Malseigne ne trouve pas une besogne trop difficile, les dispositions qu'on va faire sont bien suffisantes; mais dans le cas d'une grande résistance, et surtout d'un accord avec les garnisons, il faut que tous les moyens se combinent pour sauver la patrie d'un tel danger; et je vous demande à y marcher avec le titre de votre aide-de-camp. Ce qui est bien important, c'est de ne pas manquer son coup, et de disposer nos mesures de manière à ce que le succès ne soit pas douteux.

Bon jour, mon cher cousin; c'est de tout mon cœur que je me joins à vous, parceque je suis sur que vous servirez notre constitution, et que j'ai autant besoin que vous de l'établissement de l'ordre public. Donnez moi vos ordres et vos commissions; j'ai imaginé qu'il y auroit des cas où deux officiers de la garde nationale de Paris pourroient être utiles. Je vous embrasse de tout mon cœur.

LA FAYETTE.

No. IX.

Lettre du Roi à Mons. le Marquis DE BOUILLÉ.

St. Cloud, ce 4 Novembre 1790.

J'ESPÈRE, monsieur, que vous me connoissez assez pour ne pas douter de l'extrême satisfaction que j'ai ressentie de votre conduite à Nanci; vous avez sauvé la France le 31 Août, et vous avez par là montré aux autres le chemin et comme ils doivent se conduire. C'est le comble de la bonne conduite que vous tenez depuis un an, à laquelle vous avez eu bien du mérite, par toutes les tracasseries qu'on vous a suscitées. Continuez sur la même route; soignez votre popularité; elle peut m'être bien utile et au royaume; je la regarde comme l'ancre de salut, et que ce sera elle qui pourra servir un jour à rétablir l'ordre. J'ai été bien inquiet sur les dangers auxquels vous vous exposiez, jusqu'à ce que j'aie reçu les nouvelles de M. de Gouvenet; et je regrette bien sincèrement les braves gens qui ont péri dans cette affligéante, mais bien nécessaire affaire. Je vous prie de me marquer particulièrement ceux dont vous avez été content; je vous charge aussi de témoigner aux gardes nationales, ainsi qu'aux officiers et soldats qui vous ont si bravement secondé, combien je suis touché de leur zèle et de leur fidélité;

fidélité. Pour vous, monsieur, vous avez acquis des droits éternels à mon estime et à mon amitié.

LOUIS.

P. S. J'ai sçu qu'un de vos chevaux que vous aimiez beaucoup a été tué sous M. de Gouvernet ; je vous envoyé un des miens, que j'ai monté, et que je vous prie de garder pour l'amour de moi.

No. X.

Lettre du PRÉSIDENT DE L'ASSEMBLÉE NATIONALE à Mons. le Marquis DE BOUILLÉ.

Paris, ce 5 Septembre 1790.

L'ASSEMBLÉE nationale, monsieur, a comblé d'éloges la conduite remplie de courage et de patriotisme que vous avez tenue, en faisant rentrer dans le devoir la garnison de Nanci, et les autres coupables. Vos succès, comme guerrier, ne peuvent étonner l'assemblée nationale ; mais elle sent qu'elle a du être votre douleur d'être forcé de déployer vos talens contre des soldats rebelles accoutumés à vaincre

vaincre sous vos ordres; et cette douleur elle la partage: la gloire d'avoir vengé les loix, et reprimé des séditieux qui les enfrençoient toutes, est au-dessus de celle d'avoir été plusieurs fois vainqueur des ennemis de la France; il vous appartenait de réunir l'une et l'autre. L'assemblée nationale me charge de vous témoigner son approbation et son estime, et je m'applaudis d'être en ce moment l'interprète de ses sentimens.

Je suis, monsieur, votre très humble
et très obéissant serviteur,

HENRI JESSÉ, Président.

P. S. Je vous adresse, monsieur, une expédition en forme du décret de l'assemblée nationale, et je vous prie de faire parvenir sans délai aux gardes nationales, et aux troupes de ligne qui ont travaillé sous vos ordres au rétablissement de la paix, les lettres ci jointes, que l'assemblée m'a chargé de leur écrire; vous voudrez bien veiller à ce que toutes en aient communication.

DÉCRET de L'ASSEMBLÉE NATIONALE du
3 Septembre 1790.

L'assemblée nationale a décrété, et décrète:

Que le directoire du département de la Meurthe, et les municipalités de Nanci et de Lunéville, sont remerciés de leur zèle.

Que les gardes nationales qui ont marché sous les ordres de M. de Bouillé, sont remerciés du patriotisme, et de la bravoure civique qu'ils ont montrés pour le rétablissement de l'ordre à Nanci.

Que M. d'Esfilles est remercié pour son dévouement héroïque.

Que la nation se charge de pourvoir au sort des femmes des gardes nationales qui ont péri.

Que le général et les troupes de ligne sont approuvés pour avoir glorieusement rempli leur devoir.

Que les commissaires dont l'envoi a été décrété, se rendront sans délai à Nanci, pour y prendre les mesures nécessaires à la conservation de la tranquillité, et l'information exacte des faits qui doit amener la punition des coupables, de quelque grade, rang, et état qu'ils puissent être.

Collationné à l'original, par nous président, et secrétaires de l'assemblée nationale à Paris, le 4 Septembre 1790.

HENRI JESSÉ, Président.

Charles Claude de la Cour, Secrétaire.

Dauchy, Secrétaire.

François Paul Nicolas Antoine, Secrétaire.

Dinocheau, Secrétaire.

No. XI.

*Lettre de Monf. DE LA FAYETTE à Monf.
le Marquis DE BOUILLÉ.*

(Sans date.)

Vous êtes le sauveur de la chose publique, mon cher cousin ; j'en jouis doublement, et comme citoyen et comme votre ami ; j'ai partagé vos anxiétés sur la terrible situation où nous étions prêts à tomber, et j'ai regardé l'exécution du décret à Nanci comme la crise de l'ordre public. Aussi a-t-on bien cherché à égarer le peuple sur cet événement, je ne m'en étonne pas, puisqu'il déjoue les projets de trouble ; mais vous avez été si scrupuleux observateur de toutes les règles, que la malignité n'a trouvé à mordre nulle part, et que chaque doute produit un éclaircissement à votre avantage. Je vous envoie la copie du décret passé aujourd'hui à la presque unanimité ; il n'y a pas trente membres qui se soient levés contre. Vous recevrez des commissaires porteurs d'une proclamation dont une partie est devenue bien inutile ; c'est M. du Verdier, avocat et secrétaire des électeurs l'année passée, et M. Cayer de Gerville, procureur syndic suppléant dans la commune de Paris ; ce sont deux hommes fort honnêtes, et dont j'espère que vous serez content ;

tent; je vous écrirai plus longuement demain, mon cher cousin, après avoir causé avec Gou-
vernet, et je vous parlerai de ce que vous
m'avez mandé sur l'état de nos frontières.
Quant à l'intérieur, il y a bien encore des
mouvemens, et Paris fermente singulièrement
depuis quelques jours; mais il faudra bien que
nous venions à bout de ces difficultés qui seules
à présent peuvent retarder l'établissement de
l'ordre constitutionnel; notre union, mon cher
cousin, est un moyen de servir la chose publique,
qui est bien cher à mon cœur; et ce sentiment
est fondé sur le plus tendre attachement, et une
sensibilité éternelle pour les témoignages
d'amitié et de confiance que j'ai reçus de vous.
Bon soir, mon cher cousin; je vous écrirai
demain, les commissaires arriveront peu après
cette lettre.

LA FAYETTE.

No. XII.

Lettre du Roi à Monf. le Marquis DE BOVILLÉ.

St. Cloud, ce 23 Octobre 1790.

J'ESPÈRE, monsieur, que vous continuez à
être content de votre position avec les
troupes dans ce moment ci. Je saisis avec plaisir
les

les occasions de vous renouveler l'assurance
de tous mes sentimens d'estime pour vous.

LOUIS.

No. XIII.

Lettre du Roi à Monf. le Marquis de Bouillé.

Paris, ce 4 Fevrier 1791.

JE profite avec plaisir, monsieur, de l'oc-
casion que m'offre le voyage du Comte de
la M—— à Metz, pour vous renouveler les as-
surances de toute ma satisfaction de vos services
dans les circonstances difficiles où vous vous
êtes trouvé. Je ne peux que vous demander
de continuer de vous conduire comme vous
l'avez fait jusqu'à présent, et vous assurer de
toute ma reconnoissance et de toute mon estime.

LOUIS.

No. XIV.

*Lettre de Mons. DE LA FAYETTE à Mons. le
Marquis DE BOUILLÉ.*

Paris, ce 7 Fevrier.

IL y a bien long tems, mon cher cousin, que je ne vous ai écrit; et depuis ma conversation avec votre fils, je n'ai pas été à portée de vous donner des nouvelles intéressantes. Paris a été divisé par des factions, et le royaume fatigué par l'anarchie; les aristocrates enragés rêvent contre-révolution; les prêtres y concourent par le fanatisme; les aristocrates modérés n'ont pas le courage de faire des sottises, mais en disent beaucoup: les monarchistes impartiaux, et toutes les nuances du côté droit, ne cherchent qu'à jouer un rôle, n'en ont les moyens, ni au physique, ni au moral, et seroient aussi, s'ils parvenoient à être quelque chose, des aristocrates. A gauche, vous avez un grand nombre d'honnêtes gens qui attendent; un club de 1789, qui se perd dans les spéculations philosophiques; un club des jacobins dont le fonds veut aussi le bien, mais dont le directoire met partout le trouble; tout cela multiplié par les associés de la capitale et des provinces, et malheureusement on vise plus au nombre qu'au choix,

choix, parceque les chefs sont conduits par des intérêts et des passions personnelles; quant aux ministres, ils sont dans la révolution, et n'ont de règle, après celle-là, que de céder à ceux du parti populaire, dont ils craignent les dénonciations; les courtisans sont comme ci-devant bien bêtes, bien vils, bien aristocrates. La reine est résignée à la révolution, espérant que l'opinion changera un peu, mais redoutant la guerre; le roi ne veut que le bonheur du peuple, et la tranquillité générale, à commencer par la sienne. J'oubliois de parler de moi; je suis violemment attaqué par tous les chefs de parti, qui me regardent, comme un obstacle incompatible, et impossible à intimider; et le premier article de tout mauvais projet est de me renverser; joignez-y deux haines très méritées des aristocrates et du parti Orléans, qui a plus de moyens qu'il ne paroît en avoir; joignez-y la colère des Lameth avec lesquels j'ai été lié; de Mirabeau, qui dit que je l'ai méprisé; joignez-y de l'argent répandu, des libelles, et l'humeur que je donne à ceux que j'empêche de piller Paris; et vous aurez la somme de tout ce qui agit contre moi: mais à l'exception d'un petit nombre de têtes exaltées, qu'on égare, tous les honnêtes gens, depuis la partie la moins aisée du peuple jusqu'à ce qui n'est pas aristocrate enragé, sont pour moi. Je suis bien avec la garde nationale, à l'ex-

ception de quelques jacobins méfistimés, car les jacobins honnêtes gens sont pour moi, malgré mon obstination à ne plus aller à ce club; j'ai eu depuis deux mois moins de rapport que jamais avec la cour, parceque cela n'étoit bon à rien, et que je ne fais que ce qui peut être utile à mon pays; mais je crains qu'on n'ait profité de ma négligence pour intriguer; je fais même qu'on a été au moment de les entraîner dans de grandes sottises, et qu'ils se sont arrêtés au bord du précipice; la reine est entourée si mal, les petites têtes des Tuilleries adoptent si avidement les espérances, et calculent si mal les obstacles, qu'il faut craindre qu'on ne gâte cet instrument si précieux d'ordre public, et qu'on ne fasse du roi un moyen d'ambition personnelle. Voilà la situation générale: voici mes idées.

Quelques amis, et nommément Emeri, travaillent avec moi à un plan de conduite qui consolide la révolution, établisse sur de bonnes bases la constitution, et ramène l'ordre public. Les talens principaux de l'assemblée, Mirabeau lui-même, ne pourront se dispenser de soutenir cette association, et c'est à cela qu'il est surtout propre: voilà les tribunaux établis, la police du royaume, les juris sont décrétés; c'est le moment de faire entendre notre voix avec force, convenance, et utilité.

Vous avez accepté la coalition que mon cœur et mon patriotisme vous ont offerte ; vous disiez l'autre jour à un de mes amis—Si la Fayette et moi nous entendons bien, nous établirons une constitution. Je mets trop de prix à votre amitié et à votre opinion pour ne pas vous communiquer toutes mes idées, vous demander les vôtres, et d'ici à quelques jours, je vous écrirai avec encore plus de détails.

Mon vœu le plus cher est de finir vite et bien la révolution, d'assurer la constitution sur des bases solides, d'y employer tout ce que je possède de confiance nationale et de moyens personnels, et puis de ne plus rien être en France, ni dans le civil, ni dans le militaire, que citoyen actif, et lorsqu'il y aura guerre, votre aide-de-camp, si vous voulez de moi, sans grade ni commandement. Adieu, mon cher cousin, je vous embrasse de tout mon cœur.

FAYETTE.

P. S. Il y a beaucoup de gens qui rôlent dans leurs têtes de grands projets ; tout cela est le fruit de petites ambitions ; je vous dirai ce que j'en pense à mesure que je les connoîtrai. Quant aux honnêtes gens, comme nous, il nous convient d'aller tout droit, et tout ouvertement à un but utile et connu ; tous ces mystères et toutes ces intrigues ne servent que les fripons, comme toutes les chimères des mauvaises têtes ne servent que leurs ennemis.

No. XV.

*Lettre de Monf. le Marquis DE BOUILLÉ à
Monf. DE LA FAYETTE.*

Metz, ce 11 Fevrier 1791.

EFFECTIVEMENT, mon cher cousin, j'ai été privé long tems du plaisir de recevoir de vos lettres, et j'ai jugé que vos occupations vous avoient empêché de m'écrire. Le tableau que vous me faites de l'état de l'assemblée, de celui de Paris, des partis, et des factions qui y règnent, ce que vous me dites de l'esprit qui les dirige, est vrai, en même tems qu'il est effrayant : quelques personnes que j'ai vues ici depuis peu, en qui j'ai de la confiance, et pour lesquelles j'ai de l'estime, m'ont fait la même peinture ; M. Emeri est de ce nombre. Toutes conviennent de l'excès du mal sans connoître le remède : vous me donneriez quelques consolations, et vous feriez renaître mes espérances, en m'assurant que vous vous occupez avec M. Emeri et plusieurs autres gens capables, d'un plan de conduite qui établisse une constitution sur des bases stables ; mais il y a un an, ne m'avez vous pas exprimé le même desir et la même volonté ? ne m'avez vous pas assuré qu'on alloit des lors établir une force publique, sans l'exercice de laquelle les meilleures loix sont nulles ? et cela ne vous étoit-il pas plus possible

possible alors qu'à présent ? Cependant, depuis cette époque, qu'est-il arrivé ? Il s'est formé plusieurs partis qui ont été en opposition : les jacobins ont acquis une grande influence, et une telle supériorité qu'il est presque impossible de les détruire, et de calculer jusqu'où ira le mal qu'ils produisent en France. Le désordre s'est accru à Paris et dans les provinces ; les troupes que l'on cherchoit d'abord à séduire par des moyens de persuasion, plus que par ceux de corruption, ont été achetées, et ont rompu tous les liens de la discipline ; et cet esprit de vénalité est tellement répandu dans l'armée, que le soldat, en général, fera à celui qui le payera le plus, tandis que les chefs et les officiers dégoûtés, persécutés, sans considération et sans autorité, n'ont peut-être plus la possibilité de le faire rentrer dans le devoir.

Le mécontentement a gagné parmi le peuple, et se propage tous les jours ; les clubs de la révolution conduisent dans ce moment presque toutes les villes, dont un très petit nombre est encore contenu par la sagesse des administrateurs. Dans plusieurs, le peuple témoigne son mécontentement ; il est plus grand encore dans les campagnes, surtout dans les provinces, où le reculement des barrières, ou le serment des prêtres ont indisposé le peuple qui n'a obéi au décret, sous ces deux rapports, que par l'appareil

de la force militaire, qu'on à déployé. Déjà même on répand, et on entend dire que l'assemblée n'a pas de pouvoir constituant, et que le consentement tacite du peuple ne suffit pas, pouvant le retirer d'un moment à l'autre; que le roi n'est pas libre, que l'assemblée même ne l'est pas, que l'opinion publique peut changer, qu'elle doit même changer; que seroit-ce si cela arrivoit, et si la présence des armées étrangères sur la frontière, (car c'est dans l'ordre des choses possibles,) faisoit germer cet esprit de mécontentement, et le développoit, de manière à produire une insurrection, si non générale, du moins partielle? Je vous demande alors, si votre édifice ne seroit pas renversé, et si vous ne seriez pas écrasé sous ses ruines?

Voilà les malheurs que je prévois, et je suis persuadé que tout homme raisonnable, qui ne sera ni fanatique, ni ambitieux, ni intéressé, aura les mêmes craintes. Que faut-il faire pour les prévenir? constituer votre assemblée nationale de manière que ses pouvoirs ne puissent plus être douteux ni révoqués; qu'ils ne puissent être sujets à des réclamations; donner au roi la force suffisante pour faire exécuter les loix, et la liberté nécessaire pour que son consentement ne puisse être supposé forcé, et pour ôter tout prétexte à des réclamations qui, tôt ou tard, produisent un grand mal. Ainsi donc

donc un pouvoir légal à l'assemblée pour faire des loix, une puissance exécutive suffisante pour les faire exécuter, et l'entière liberté au monarque qui en est le chef. Voilà ce qui peut établir solidement une constitution libre, et vous faire éviter une série d'anarchie qui doit finir nécessairement par une catastrophe.

Mais cela, est-il possible ou non ? Je l'ignore. Puis-je, et dois-je, même m'en occuper ; impuissant et incapable d'opérer un aussi grand bien, il ne m'est permis que de développer mes idées à quelques hommes qui, comme vous, sont dans une situation qui leur donne les moyens d'y contribuer. Me taire avec les autres, respecter l'opinion publique, obéir aux loix émanées des principales autorités, me renfermer dans l'exercice de mes devoirs ; sans sortir des bornes qu'ils me prescrivent. Telle est la règle que je me suis imposée, mon cher cousin, et que je suivrai pendant tout le tems que je vivrai sous le gouvernement François et que je le servirai.

Si le service de votre patrie vous appelloit à l'armée, vous y seriez employé et vous y serviriez avec la distinction qui est due à vos talens, et à votre rang, et votre émule de patriotisme, je n'aurois d'autre ambition que de partager

partager avec vous l'honneur et la gloire qui en seroient la récompence.

Adieu, mon cher cousin, je vous renouvelle les assurances de mon tendre attachement.

BOUILLÉ.

No. XVI.

*Lettre du ROI DE SUEDE à Mons. le Marquis
DE BOUILLÉ.*

Aix-la-Chapelle, ce 3 Juillet 1791.

MONSIEUR le Marquis de Bouillé, J'ai reçu avec bien de la gratitude la marque de confiance que vous m'avez témoignée, en m'envoyant votre lettre à l'assemblée nationale. Je l'ai trouvée remplie de ces sentimens d'attachement pour votre souverain, et d'horreur pour l'anarchie, qui sont si dignes d'un guerrier tel que vous. La fortune est aveugle dans les commotions civiles comme à la guerre ; mais les principes de fidélité et d'honneur sont immuables, et la réputation y est attachée plus qu'aux succès : depuis long tems la vôtre, si bien établie, comme militaire, vient de l'être encore plus par votre confiance,

constance, et votre inviolable attachement pour votre souverain vertueux et infortuné : recevez-en mes complimens. Il n'en est pas en Europe qui ne mettent un grand prix à acquérir au nombre de leur sujets, et de voir à la tête de leurs armées, un homme comme vous ; peut-être le plus ancien, et le plus fidèle allié de votre patrie, pourroit-il y avoir un droit préférable aux autres, d'autant plus que vous ne quitteriez pas le service de votre véritable patrie en entrant au sien. Mais dans quelque état que vous soyiez, vous devez toujours être certain de mon estime, et de l'intérêt que je prendrai toujours à vous : c'est avec ces sentimens, que je prie Dieu qu'il vous ait, Monsieur le Marquis de Bouillé, dans sa sainte et digne garde.

Votre très affectionné,

GUSTAVE.

No. XVII.

*Lettre du ROI DE SUEDE à Monf. le Marquis
DE BOUILLÉ.*

Dortingholm, ce 2 Septembre 1791.

MONSIEUR le Marquis de Bouillé, Je viens de recevoir presque à la fois vos deux lettres du 11 et 16 Août. Je vous suis bien obligé
des

des nouvelles que vous m'y donner. L'entrevue de Pilnitz décidera de bien des choses, et il est tems qu'on prenne un parti, car la saison avance ; et pour moi, je ne connois qu'un seul obstacle insurmontable aux projets de la vie ; c'est l'obstacle physique, et si on ne se décide bientôt, cet obstacle sera l'allié le plus utile de l'assemblée nationale. Je vous parlerai du mémoire dont il est question dans votre lettre du 16 Août par le courier que je vais envoyer d'ici dans quelques jours, lorsque je saurai définitivement les résolutions de l'impératrice de Russie : mais je dois vous avertir d'avance que tous les marins et les cartes maritimes que nous avons ici, prouvent qu'une flotte ne peut entrer dans le port d'Ostende, et il est à remarquer que l'entrée de ce port n'est praticable qu'en passant devant Dunkerque. Cela n'empêchera cependant pas le projet, si l'on trouve une sûreté pour l'hyvernage ; mais vous sentez bien ainsi que moi, que l'opération combinée, ne peut avoir lieu, et que la flotte une fois partie des ports de Suède, doit sans s'arrêter exécuter son entreprise. Cela me conviendrait aussi mieux, car tous ces grands plans combinés ne réussissent presque pas : Je vous écrirai incessamment sur tous cela avec plus de détail. Je suis, au reste, bien aise de voir le bon accord qui règne entre vous et les princes. M. le Comte d'Artois est bien fait pour rendre justice

justice au mérite, et sentir le prix de votre zèle. Je suis persuadé que vous lui verrez déployer dans ces momens critiques, les vertus d'un petit fils d'Henry IV. Je lui en ai trouvé la loyauté, la franchise, et le germe de toutes les qualités faites pour inspirer l'enthousiasme, et l'augmenter par l'intérêt que ses malheurs seuls ont droit d'inspirer. Ce seroit un grand point que la neutralité de l'Angleterre dont vous me parlez : pour la Hollande, je doute qu'on puisse compter sur ses troupes ; c'est une affaire très compliquée que de remuer cette masse. Pour moi, je suis prêt, dès que les moyens me seront procurés ; et dans trois semaines du jour de l'ordre donné, l'armée sera réunie à l'endroit où il faudra l'embarquer. Je serois curieux de savoir à qui on confiera le commandement de l'armée combinée de l'Empire, d'Autriche, et de Prusse. Cette besogne sera très difficile, mais de l'opinion et des talens de celui à qui le commandement sera confié, dépendront le succès et la célérité de l'entreprise : mais ce qui est essentiel, c'est le secret sur l'opération qui m'a été proposée : dans tous les cas, je compte vous avoir avec moi, et cela me vaudra dix mille hommes. J'ai requis le plus parfait accord, le calme le plus entier, et nous avons la plus heureuse récolte : tout cela ne contrariera pas mes vues ; mais le tems de la saison avance, et c'est le seul inconvenient que je redoute. J'espère que

VOUS

vous continuerez à me donner de vos nouvelles, et que vous êtes persuadé de l'estime avec laquelle je prie Dieu, Monsieur le Marquis de Bouillé, qu'il vous ait dans sa sainte et digne garde.

Votre très affectionné,

GUSTAVE.

No. XVIII.

*Lettre du ROI DE SUEDE à Monf. le Marquis
DE BOUILLÉ.*

Stokulm, ce 23 Decembre 1791.

MONSEUR le Marquis de Bouillé, J'ai reçu très exactement toutes les lettres que vous m'avez écrites, et vous ne devez pas douter que je les ai lues avec l'attention que doit inspirer tout ce qui vient d'un homme de votre mérite, et qui roule sur des affaires auxquelles je prends un intérêt aussi vif et sincère. Je ne vous cacherai cependant pas qu'il y a une de vos lettres qui m'a surpris autant qu'elle m'a fait de peine; j'avois cru que nous avions fait nos conventions à Aix-la-Chapelle, et qu'en chevalier François, vous y resteriez; le zèle pour votre souverain infortuné vous ayant fait
quitter

quitter votre patrie, et vous étant attaché à moi, son plus ancien allié, et, vous le voyez maintenant, son unique et fidèle ami, je devois croire que ce ne feroit que pour lui que vous pouviez me quitter, et que la Suede étoit devenue votre seconde patrie ; mais j'aime à croire que votre attachement à votre souverain, ce sentiment si noble et si respectable qui vous distingue, vous a emporté par l'enthousiasme le plus naturel pour ceux que vous croyiez alors aller servir sa cause. Vous avez vu depuis qui avoit, de moi ou d'eux, le zèle, et la constance jointe à la sincérité ; je ne doute pas que vous êtes éclairé, et je vous prie de croire que je ne parlerai plus sur ce sujet, mais vous me devez savoir gré qu'en loyal chevalier, je vous aie parlé de ce qui me tenoit à cœur ; maintenant je vous regarde tout à moi, tout comme je serai toujours à vous. Voilà ce que je ne pouvois vous écrire par la poste ; et je n'ai pu me résoudre à vous écrire sans vous ouvrir mon cœur ; n'en parlons plus, et ne nous occupons que du soin de tirer votre roi de l'état où il est. Vous savez déjà que le traité signé entre moi et l'impératrice vient d'être ratifié ; sa constance et la mienne n'est pas douteuse. Vous avez vu aussi qu'elle et moi sommes les seuls souverains qui ont envoyé des ministres aux princes, et je puis vous confier que nos ministres respectifs reçoivent ordre de quitter Paris, sous prétexte

de congé, que nous nous préparons et nous concertons pour le printems ; mais que nous sommes convenus d'endormir l'assemblée pour quelle ne prenne pas des mesures maritimes qui mettroient des embarras pour nous, ou nous obligeroient à de plus grands préparatifs, puisque nous ne pouvons communiquer avec vous que par la mer. C'est du moins sur cela que me paroît porter le plus l'attention de l'impératrice, et les gros vaisseaux qui se trouvent à Brest, ne laissent pas d'appuyer les raisons de cette princesse. Cependant elle ne cesse de presser le roi de Prusse et l'empereur ; et je ne doute point que cette princesse ne réussisse enfin à persuader au chef de l'empire, de l'obligation où il est comme souverain, comme frère, et comme empereur, de venir au secours de sa sœur, et d'un roi opprimé : ce que vous me mandez sur les sentimens de la reine de France doit venir à l'appui des bonnes raisons qu'on a à lui présenter, et le forcera dans son dernier retranchement. Cependant l'impératrice tient fortement à ne rien faire dans ce moment qui puisse dénoter l'intention d'une attaque au printems ; c'est aussi pourquoi je ne puis agir, pour avoir les troupes dont vous me parlez, qui vont quitter la solde de la république des Provinces Unies ; d'ailleurs, vous savez que c'est l'Espagne qui doit fournir l'argent, et quoiqu'elle m'ait fait porter les paroles les plus favorables,

favorables, il ne s'en est pas encore suivi d'effet. Cependant tout est prêt ici, et en attendant, pour me débarrasser de tout embarras, et mettre un ordre parfait dans mes finances, embarrassées par les différentes sortes de monnoie depuis la guerre, je vais faire convoquer les états généraux; c'est, comme vous le voyez, pelotter, en attendant partie. J'espere que cette assemblée, au lieu d'apporter le désordre, ramenera l'ordre et la tranquillité, et qu'elle sera comme la lance d'Achille, qui seule savoit guérir les maux qu'elle avoit fait. Au reste, je connois un peu la tactique des dièttes; j'y suis assez savant, et je voudrois autant, et aussi bien connoître la tactique des Turenne, pour bien servir la cause des vrais François; mais j'ai, pour suppléer à ce que je ne fais pas encore, un bon second, et j'espere qu'il ne me fera pas faux bond. Je lui envoie, pour cet effet, les provisions et brevets de sa charge, ainsi que ceux pour le comte de Bouillé et le chevalier de Rodéz, en le priant de se souvenir qu'il m'a promis d'être mon second et mon compagnon d'armes; sur ce, je prie Dieu qu'il vous ait, Monsieur le Marquis de Bouillé, dans sa sainte et digne garde.

Votre très affectionné,

GUSTAVE.

J'écris au comte Lovenlenhem, mon ministre à la Haïe, de me donner tous les renseignements nécessaires sur les troupes en question.

No. XIX.

*Lettre du ROI DE SUEDE à Mons. le Marquis
DE BOUILLÉ.*

Geflé, ce 6 Fevrier 1792.

MONSIEUR le Marquis de Bouillé, J'ai reçu
il y a quelques jours votre lettre du 9
Janvier ; j'attends avec bien du plaisir l'arrivée
de votre fils ; il sera reçu comme quelqu'un qui
vous appartient : c'est tout vous dire ; j'ai gémi
depuis long tems, sur le peu de secret des con-
seils de Coblentz, mais c'est la suite ordinaire
des secrets confiés à beaucoup de monde ; j'ai
été trop souvent dans le cas de conduire des
révolutions ou de les combattre, pour ne pas
savoir qu'elles sont infaisables, si un seul ne
les dirige pas, et qu'il est impossible de con-
sultier d'autre que son cœur. Si M. le Comte
d'Artois vouloit s'en croire, je suis certain qu'il
seroit très capable de mener à bon port la
barque, mais c'est un malheur attaché aux
Bourbons, qu'avec toutes les qualités qui font
des héros, ils ont une défiance d'eux-mêmes,
qui est véritablement injuste, mais qui fait qu'ils
prennent trop de conseils : il n'y a rien de dés-
espéré pourtant, car il semble que l'impératrice
de Russie s'affermisse de plus en plus dans ses
résolutions

résolutions généreuses, par les obstacles mêmes qu'on veut lui susciter, et depuis que la paix vient d'être signée avec les Turcs à Jassy, ce 9 Janvier, elle aura les mains plus libres. Pour moi, je suis occupé à la tenue de ma diète, qui, à la surprise de tous mes antagonistes, et peut-être même de mes amis, se passe dans la plus parfaite tranquillité ; j'ai cru que voulant concourir à remettre l'ordre chez mes amis, je devois commencer par l'établir chez moi, et tâcher de calmer les esprits divisés. J'étois sur des trois ordres, et la noblesse qui étoit la plus acharnée contre moi en 1789, est retenue par la pluralité décidée, et l'attachement constant des trois ordres inférieurs. On tâche de lui faire comprendre que dans le 18^{ème} siècle il faut que le premier ordre de l'état se soutienne par la stabilité du trône, et par sa protection, et non en voulant lutter contre leur souverain ; ils n'entendent pas encore entièrement leurs intérêts, mais ils pensent qu'ils sont les plus foibles, et commencent à avoir assez de prudence pour ne pas vouloir heurter l'opinion de leur roi et des trois ordres, leurs co-états, dont les volontés réunies font la loi. Dans cette situation des choses, je ne puis presque pas douter que tout ne se passe à ma satisfaction, et j'aurai pour lors l'avantage d'être le seul souverain qui ait osé risquer de tenir une aussi grande assemblée, et d'y avoir réussi : il est vrai que je connois

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un peu la tactique des diètes ; si je savois aussi bien celle de la guerre, je ne craindrois pas les Lukner, ni les Rochambeau ; mais comme j'aurai avec moi de bons soldats, et un bon second, je ne doute pas des succès. Sur ce, je prie Dieu qu'il vous ait, Monsieur le Marquis de Bouillé, dans sa sainte et digne garde.

Votre très affectionné,

GUSTAVE.

FINIS.

